August 2013 Vol.24 Iss.08

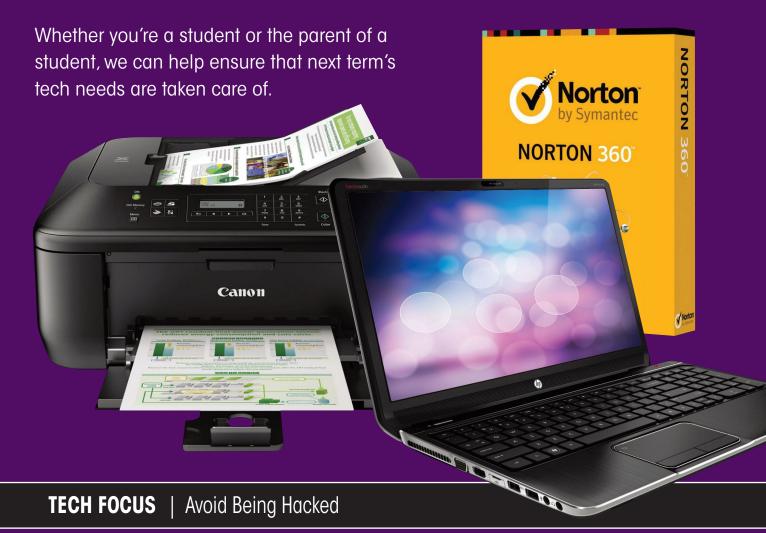
News & Notes
Business News

Business Tech
Software Audits

Personal Tech
Windows 8.1: What To Expect

HARDWARE | SOFTWARE | ACCESSORIES

Get Ready For Back-To-School





Volume 24 . August 2013 . Issue 8

On The Cover See pg. 7

It's Back-To-School Time

Remember those cute little pencil holders? And the handy book covers made from grocery bags? Well, those don't cut it any more-at least, not for high school and college students. They need tech: high-tech, mobile tech, clever tech, fun tech. They need tools that will give them an advantage in the classroom, in the dorm, and in study hall. We'll help you select the best tech tools for your student.



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It's a dark, dangerous world out there. Our new-found ability to share everything we want with everyone we know has put us in danger of accidentally sharing things we don't want to share with anyone. What can you do about it? Be safe. Be smart. You're a consumer of hightech media, so it's best to be an *informed* consumer. We'll help. Read this to learn how to protect yourself from an attack—or how to recover if it's too late to avoid an attack.



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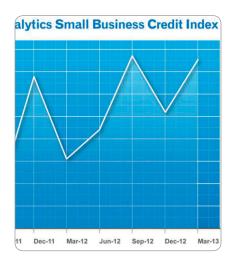
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Business News



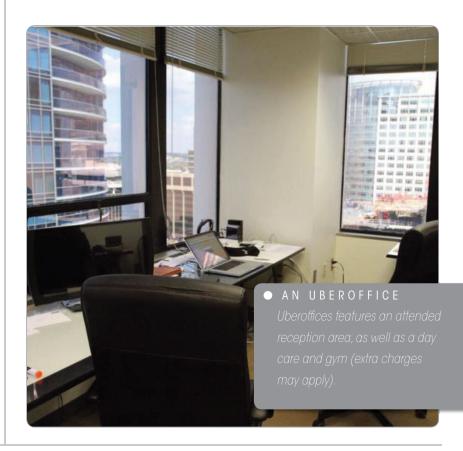
• On a state level, delinquency rates in Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and Idaho were much lower than U.S. averages.

SMALL BUSINESS CREDIT INDEX

The latest Small Business Credit Index from Experian/Moody's Analytics examined the credit quality of small businesses during the first quarter of 2013. The index added 5.7 points from the fourth quarter of 2012 to hit 109. In particular, delinquency rates for small businesses in places like Houston, Phoenix, and San Diego were significantly lower than the average United States rate in Q1 of 2013. Consumer spending was other key aspect contributing to the five-point upswing, as small businesses were able to meet their payment obligations.

UBEROFFICES IN WASHINGTON D.C.

Uberoffices recently opened a co-working office in the Tysons Corner area of McLean, VA, which makes this the second Uberoffice location near D.C. (the first being in Arlington, VA). And in September, Uberoffice plans to open an office in the Dupont Circle area. Available office sizes range from as small as an open desk to a 12-person office with a window. Access to conference rooms is free (based on availability), and members will enjoy access to a stocked kitchen, lounge, shared printer/copier/scanner, and 24/7 building access.



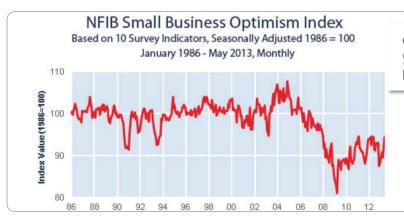


• The Small Business Lifecycle can help determine what needs to be done and find the right strategy for your business.

THE LIFECYCLE OF SMALL BUSINESSES

Charlie Gilkey's website (www.productiveflourishing.com) helps people to plan and be productive. And The Small Business Lifecycle is a book that breaks down your business into five stages, each of which has different strengths, to show you where to focus your resources to grow your business. Some of the key topics include: questions to ask before you start a small business; how to get a foothold in the market; why some "successful" produces and services cause you to get stuck; four things that must be in place to grow; and how not to break a successful, scalable business.





 After a downturn at the end of last vear, the index numbers are back to the point where they were in May of 2012.

SMALL BUSINESS OPTIMISM UP IN MAY

The NFIB (National Federation of Independent Business) compiles a monthly Index Of Small Business Optimism. The most recent compilation found that May's reading of 94.4 was the second-highest since the recession began in December of 2007. The index also increased 2.3 points and was up for the second consecutive month. That said, the NFIB also noted that "The Index does not signal strong economic growth for the sector. Eight of the Index components gained momentum, showing some moderation in pessimism about the economy and future sales."

DEVELOP SKILLS WITH ONLINE CLASSES

MOOC is short for massive online open courses, and until recently, the online college classes have been offered for highly specialized topics, like Computation Molecular Evolution or Maps And The Geospatial Revolution. Coursera (www.coursera.org) will now be offering introductory level classes, such as introduction to public speaking and algebra, to expand the classes to general education. The basic classes will be offered in partnership with 10 state university systems within the United States.



• The new classes are designed to let people without bachelor's degrees enhance their education, as well as to brush up on skills.

SMALL BUSINESS EVENTS

AMERICAN ENERGY SECURITY SUMMIT

Washington D.C. | August 5 - 6, 2013 www.mbda.gov

MACOMB-OU INCUBATOR'S CAPITAL RAISE **MEETUPS**

Sterling Heights, Mich. | August 6, 2013 www.oakland.edu/macombouinc

10TH ANNUAL ELITE SDVOSB NATIONAL CONFERENCE

San Diego, Calif. | August 21 - 23, 2013 www.sdvobconference.com/

2013 SMALL BUSINESS CONVENTION

Sandusky, Ohio | October 24 - 25, 2013 http://smallbizconvention.com/

THE SMALL BUSINESS EXPO (BOSTON)

Boston, Mass. | October 17, 2013 www.thesmallbusinessexpo.com/

THE SMALL BUSINESS EXPO (LOS ANGELES)

Los Angeles, Calif. | November 7, 2013 www.thesmallbusinessexpo.com/

Small Business Resources

The Web has a trove of resources for SOHOs (small and home offices) and small businesses—if you know where to look. Find an association that can help you meet your goals; get information from the government about loans, grants, and taxes; and stay up-to-date with the best small business newsletters and blogs. If you have a pressing question, pose it on a forum to see what your peers have to say.



Associations & SUPPORT

Better Business Bureau www.bbb.org (703) 276-0100 4200 Wilson Blvd. STE 800 Arlington, VA 22203-1838

Main Street Alliance (MSA)

mainstreetalliance.org info@mainstreetalliance .org (603) 831-1835 3518 S. Edmunds St. Seattle, WA 98118

National Federation of Independent Businesses (NFIB)

www.nfib.com (800) 634-2669 (615) 872-5800 53 Century Blvd. STE 250 Nashville, TN 37214

National Small Business Association (NSBA)

nsba.biz (202) 293-8830 1156 15th St., STE 1100 Washington, DC 20005

SCORE

www.score.org (800) 634-0245 (703) 487-3612 1175 Herndon Pkwy **STE 900** Herndon, VA 20170

Small Business Development Centers Network (SBDCNET)

www.sbdcnet.org (800) 689-1912 501 W. Durango Blvd. San Antonio, TX 78207



BLOGS

Signal vs. Noise 37signals.com/svn/posts

Small Business Search Marketing

www.smallbusinesssem .com

Small Biz Bee

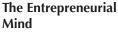
smallbizbee.com

Small Business Trends

smallbiztrends.com

The Small Business Blog

www.sme-blog.com



www.drjeffcornwall.com



FORUMS

Small Business Administration Community

www.sba.gov /community

The Small Business **Community Forums**

www.smallbusiness forums.org

Small Business Ideas Forum

www.smallbusinessbrief .com/forum

The Young Entrepreneur

www.youngentrepreneur .com/forum



GOVERNMENT

Grants.gov

House Committee On Small Business

smallbusiness.house.gov

BLOG

Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center

www.irs.gov/businesses /small

Small Business Administration (SBA)

sba.gov

U.S. Copyright Office copyright.gov

U.S. Department of Labor dol.gov

U.S. Senate Committee on Small Business & **Entrepreneurship**

sbc.senate.gov

Small Business **Development Centers**

Assistance For Entrepreneurs

aven't the foggiest idea how to harness your entrepreneurial spirit, pull yourself anywhere using bootstraps, or think in or out of a box? Starting and running your own business is tough, but fortunately for prospective and current small business owners, SBDCs (Small Business Development Centers; asbdc-us.org) dispense with the clichés and offer training, counseling, and other assistance to help you craft your vision into a real-world success.

Run A Small Business

Pooling resources from federal, state, and local governments, as well as the private sector and the educational community, The Association of Small Business Development Centers is truly a joint venture with a vested interest in fostering small business growth. For an overview of what the SBDC can offer you and your small business, visit bit.ly /dKYe2a. The SBA (Small Business Administration; www.sba.gov) is partnered with SBDCs.

Help On Your Turf

You may be surprised to learn that there's probably an SBDC branch nearby; there are locations in all 50 states, in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and even in the U.S. territories. There are 63 nationwide Lead Small Business Development Centers coordinating program services for every sub-center and satellite location in each state. Centers are made up of directors, full-time staff members, and various part-time staff and volunteers.

The best way to contact your nearest SBDC is to visit the Association of Small Business Development Centers' Web site (asbdc-us. org), input your ZIP code into the Find Your Nearest Small Business Development Center text box, and then click Go. The results page will highlight Lead Centers but rank centers in order of those closest to your location. Often, SBDCs partner with universities and colleges, and tend to be found on campuses across the country. On the search results page, you'll also find a link to the local office's Web page,

Frequent Question

If you're like many other people starting a small business, funding is at the top of your mind. A common question that entrepreneurs have for SBDCs is: "Am I eligible for grant money?"

The answer depends on the nature of your business. Grants. gov (www.grants.gov) will give you a clear picture of your options before your visit to a Small Business Development Center.

email address, phone number, a fax number if available, and address.

The Closest Thing To A Free Lunch

The services offered may vary by location, but all SBDCs offer many services free of charge. Some typical services you can expect from your nearest SBDC include help with financial, marketing, production, organization, engineering, and technical problems and access to feasibility studies that can flesh out a fledgling business plan. Some SBDCs also offer affordable training seminars to help with various aspects of running a business. You can also rest assured that your business with the SBDC will remain confidential.

Women's Business Centers

The SBA offers WBCs (Women's Business Centers), which directly serve female entrepreneurs through nearly 100 educational centers nationwide. This organization strives to assist women in overcoming the hurdles they face in today's business environment by offering business management training and technical assistance to all women, with a special emphasis on economically or socially disadvantaged women. The services and training programs are also commonly offered in multiple languages to enable those who speak English as a second language or are still learning English. To find your nearest WBC, visit bit.ly/hs3st2.

Small Business, Big Payoff

Small business owners know that achieving success is about taking risks, innovating, and making tough decisions day in and day out. Thanks to the services offered at the SBA, SBDCs, and WBCs, you're not on your own.

Back To School

All The Hardware A Student Needs

Sure, returning and new high school or college students can get by with naught but their wits and a pencil, but to make this semester as productive (and as fun) as possible, they'll need a gadget or two. The following hardware is sure to give him or her an advantage, make life easier, educate, and entertain in equal measure.

here is a wide variety of hardware out there that is capable of easing a person's academadventure. In the following sections, we'll list the hardware tools that can be useful for students and point out the benefits of each hardware category. We'll include computers in all their various forms, including standard desktop PCs, laptops, Ultrabook™ devices, tablets, and convertibles; printers; smartphones; storage devices; a range of entertainmentfocused electronics; networking gear; calculators; and more.

We'll also provide a handful of examples of products that fit into each category and describe how they will simplify your student's studies. For more specific product information, turn to the Buyer's Guide section of this magazine.

A New Computer

Of all the hardware listed here. a computer is one of the few musthaves. But it's not enough to select a PC, laptop, or tablet based on the sticker price alone. All device types may be able to accomplish many of the same things, but their capabilities and strength vary greatly. Also, it's important to choose a device that will be able to handle all the tasks your student will need to accomplish now, as well as those that may crop up down the road as he or she begins to zero in on a chosen career path. If you're sending your student off



to college soon, these buying tips will help you determine the best type of computer to purchase.

Laptop Or Desktop?

For most students, mobility takes precedence over horsepower (and yes, even today these two features are at odds). Laptops are great for students because they let the user get to work wherever he or she happens to be, whether in class, in the library, or in the dorm room. Today's laptops also come jam-packed with all the latest technologies for connecting, sharing files, participating in voice chat sessions, and more.

But while laptops may beat desktops when it comes to pure portability, desktops will in almost all cases stand the test of time better than laptops. The latter category usually only allows memory and hard drive upgrades. A desktop computer, on the other hand, lets the user upgrade almost any component and easily replace faulty components without having to scrap the whole unit or send it away to be repaired, as can be the case with a laptop. Furthermore, there are areas of study, such as engineering and graphics design, where students may need a computer with the processing and



The iBuyPower Power ST702 Gaming Desktop PC is more than capable of handling any computing task you set before it.



The Toshiba Qosmio X875-Q7190 is a desktop-replacement grade laptop with a 17.3-inch screen and an Intel Core i7 processor.

graphics horsepower to handle the demanding software they may be required to use. It's possible for a laptop to meet those highend requirements—but such a system may be outside of your price range. Normally, desktop PCs are more affordable than laptops with the same processing power and video capabilities, and the former may better fit your budget.

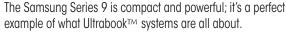
Laptop Size & Weight

If you're leaning toward a laptop, then you'll be happy to know that even though they're highly mobile, they can also be extremely powerful. If it's been a few years since you replaced a desktop, you may even be surprised to find that a powerful laptop can do everything you want just as quickly as a desktop machine, if not more so. If you're investing in a laptop, you'll want to think about how important portability and performance will be when on campus. Generally speaking, a larger, heavier laptop will have a larger screen. If working with images and video will factor into your student's requirements, then make sure you get a laptop with a 1920 x 1080 screen resolution or better; that's standard HD resolution and it'll come in handy when drafting or creating short films and professional-looking graphics and digital artwork.

Generally speaking, a more substantial laptop will also pack more performance than a lightweight model, because there's more space for hardware inside the bigger model. It's not so much that the components are physically bigger (in the case of a graphics adapter they can be, but in the case of a processor, they generally aren't), but the heatsinks used to cool off those powerful components are larger and may require dedicated fans to keep the system running cool. However, keep in mind that as a laptop's size and performance increase, its battery life decreases dramatically. Finding the right balance between screen size, battery life, and performance is always difficult, especially if you don't have much experience using a laptop yourself. As long are there are no particular screen size or high-performance requirements, we suggest you try to get a model with more battery life than you think you'll need.

If a student's primary usage will consist mainly of accessing the Internet, using a word processing application, and streaming video, a lightweight laptop should be up to the task. On the other hand, those who will be regularly creating presentations, editing large







The HP ENVY x2 11 is a convertible that lets you detach the screen from the keyboard to use it as a tablet.

images, creating and editing HD video, performing any 3D rendering, gaming, and multitasking often may need to sacrifice some portability to get the kind of performance they need.

Features

Depending on the types of tasks you perform, some features may be more important than others. We'll briefly cover some of the key considerations.

Processor. Among modern CPUs, one of the biggest performance differentiators is the number of cores (for an AMD processor) or threads (for an Intel processor) that are built into the processor. Generally, the more that are available, the faster applications installed on the system will run and the more a user can multitask on the system in guestion. Another feature to look for in processors is its ability to dynamically increase its clock speed depending on the tasks at hand. Intel calls its technology Turbo Boost and AMD calls its variation Turbo Core. In both cases, the processor's core clock is likely to go up in instances where it is working very hard, but the software can only use one or two cores/threads at a time.

Memory. Most current PCs will include at least 4GB of memory, but for students who tend to frequently multitask, for instance, running a word processing program, an instant message application, a web browser, and a social networking site, it's a good idea to invest in a PC with 6GB or 8GB of memory, as the system can better handle multitasking. Those working with imaging and content creation software will also appreciate some extra memory.

SSD vs. hard drive. A laptop will likely only have either an SSD (solid state drive) or an HDD (hard disk drive) for its internal storage device. SSDs are much faster and use less energy than HDDs. The latter usually offer more storage space for less money. Those who value speed when loading applications and the operating system should go with an SSD. People with large collections of multimedia may prefer an HDD for the extra (and affordable) storage space.

Ports and graphics. Will you or your student be regularly connecting the laptop or desktop PC to an HDTV, perhaps in order to stream movies and other Web content? If so, you should look for a system with an HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface) output. Students who will need to connect a variety of peripherals—such as a printer, Web cam, or charger for a



The Lenovo C440 is an all-in-one that packs a lot of computing power into a small space.



The Google Nexus 7 is a 7-inch tablet with a bright and vivid screen, making it perfect for games, videos, and a bunch of other cool things.

mobile phone and tablet—should ensure that the laptop or desktop PC offers enough free USB ports.

Convertibles

A convertible is a laptop that either lets you separate the screen from the keyboard, or lets you rotate and fold the screen back against the keyboard, in order to use the device as a tablet. Convertibles are equipped with touchscreens, and they make navigating with touch gestures a much more intuitive experience. Some convertibles come with a stylus and handwriting recognition software for making notes. Windows 8's Start screen was designed for a touchscreen environment, so if you plan to get a new laptop, consider a convertible.

All-In-Ones

The AIO consists of a monitor and PC tower combined in a single unit. Despite being designed to be used more like a stationary PC, the internal components are similar to those of a laptop. As a result, those looking to upgrade an AIO down the road are usually stuck with just memory and SSD/ HDD upgrade options.

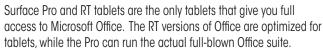
But an AIO is great for students because it is incredibly space efficient. AIOs also often feature touch screens, and they have a leg up on laptops because they use a full-size keyboard and a standalone mouse, which makes working on them for long periods not just viable, but enjoyable. The large vivid screens, coupled with 'Net-based streaming video, may lead you to watch more TV on your AIO than on your TV.

The Ultrabook™ Option

If you're in the market for a new mobile computing platform,

Ultrabook™ systems stand apart from laptops in a number of ways. Think of an Ultrabook™ as a class of laptop that is based on Intel's Core processors and designed to favor portability, long battery life, and adaptable performance. An Ultrabook™ is always less than an inch thick, designed to wake up in a flash, offers battery life that lets you go farther and further between charges, delivers access to your favorite applications, and features Intel HD Graphics for an impressive graphical experience. Many also support Turbo Boost Technology for a boost of extra performance on demand, twofactor authentication that makes sure only you have access to the vital documents and data on your device, and Intel Anti-Theft Technology, which lets you remotely disable and wipe your laptop if it's ever lost or stolen.







The HTC One smartphone has a 1080p HD screen, guad-core processor, and support for up to 32GB of storage.

Tablets

Tablets are hot right now, and many buyers are foregoing a computer upgrade in favor of a tablet. Benefits include thin and light form factors, long battery life, and ever expandable functionality thanks to massive and ever-expanding app stores. But we caution you against trying to send your student off to class with access to nothing more than a tablet. These devices do mobile really well, which means they're good for performing a million small tasks when you're out and about. When you need to write up a dissertation, edit high resolution photos, create videos, and pull an all-nighter to cram for an exam, the tablet will likely fall short. Bluetooth keyboard accessories can certainly help, but nothing you can add to a tablet will make it easier to use for hours at a time.

That said, tablets are great supplemental devices. When used in tandem with a laptop or PC, the tablet can help your student share study notes when out and about, retrieve files from home, access the Internet from virtually anywhere, keep in contact with the family back home with social networking and vid-chat apps, perform complex calculations using apps, generate quick spreadsheets in the field, and in countless other wavs.

Google Android, Microsoft Windows RT, and Apple iPad are the top three tablets you'll find on the market today (the Kindle and Nook tablets run a modified version of Android), and they all vary widely in price, features, and user interface experience. If you currently have a smartphone that uses an OS from Microsoft, Apple, or Google, then you can

use your experience with it as a good indicator of how your tablet experience with the respective OS will shake out. Also, if you've purchased apps or multimedia content on any platform, you'll generally be able to use that content on a tablet that operates on the same platform.

Benefits of the Window RT tablet include access to Microsoft Office apps, a Windows 8-like experience, an impressive build quality, and a growing app marketplace. Apple and Googlebased devices both have much larger app stores than Microsoft's tablet platform. Apple's devices tend to cost more, but the build quality is consistently excellent across all models. Android-based tablets are available from dozens of manufacturers and have wildly varying price points, though many are very good here as well.



The Xbox 360 can double as a DVD player, and the PS3 adds Blu-ray Disc playback to its stable of non-gaming capabilities.



Nintendo's 3DS lets you play games and take 3D photos that you can view right on the device.

Fun & Games

e all know that you go to school to learn the three "Ars," but when all that hard work is done, kids just wanna kick back. One of the best ways to do so is with a new HDTV, gaming console, or handheld gaming device. The possibilities for social enlightenment are boundless.

A game console, such as Microsoft's Xbox 360, Sony's PlayStation 3, or Nintendo's Wii U, is a great way to let your favorite learner let off a little steam. All three consoles plug into an HDTV and let gamers unwind with a wide range of games. Online multiplayer is a major feature of all three, so users can engage with other players from all over the world. They also support robust online communication capabilities, so users can chat, and in some cases, even video chat with friends and family. All three also support online streaming apps such as Netflix, Hulu, and Amazon Instant Video, so movie night is never more than a few button presses away (additional service fees may apply). The Xbox 360 and PlayStation 3 also double as DVD players. The PlayStation 3 also lets you play Blu-ray Discs. As you can see, modern consoles can provide you with a very capable entertainment setup without the need to purchase or hook up a lot of extra components.

Gamers shouldn't be sequestered to the dorm room though. Mobile gaming on a handheld, such as the PS Vita or the Nintendo 3DS, lets players grab a quick moment whenever and wherever he or she is. Both devices have sophisticated wireless technology, touchscreens, and built-in cameras. The PlayStation Vita has front and back cameras, built-in GPS, and support for 3G AT&T cellular and Wi-Fi networking. The Nintendo 3DS features dual touch screens, a stylus, glasses-free 3D technology, Wi-Fi, and two cameras on the back of the screen, which lets you take 3D photos and view them on the device.

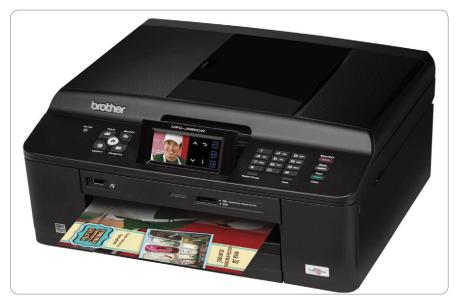
Don't forget, both tablets and smartphones can double as gaming devices. Advantages here include a vast library of inexpensive games and no dedicated hardware to lug around and keep charged on a daily basis. Tablets offer larger screens, too. And your smartphone is smart enough to put the game on hold whenever you get a phone call.

Benefits a student might like about some Android tablets include the ability to expand the internal memory using microSD cards.

Smartphones

A new smartphone can make a big difference to a student. Aside from letting him or her stay in contact with friends and family, smartphones can actually double as a study partner, letting users download and read books (often even including textbooks) right from their devices. Apps also add a lot of utility that will come in handy for a student of any subject. With the power of the Internet always at your fingertips, no information is out of reach.

When choosing a smartphone and the respective cellular plan, consider buying a pair that support tethering. This is a great way to help your student stay connected with all of his or her devices. Tethering allows a laptop, tablet, or other Wi-Fi-capable device to



The Brother MFC J625DW is an all-in-one printer that lets you print, copy, scan, and fax without taking up much space.

use the smartphone as a mobile hotspot, with data transmission occurring over the phone's cellular service in lieu of Wi-Fi. (You may pay extra for this facility.)

Printers

A printer may not immediately jump to mind as necessary for students, but having one accessible

To TV Or Not To TV

It wasn't that long ago that the TV (or HDTV, as the case may be) was easily one of the most crucial fixtures of dorm room decor. But the way we, and especially those in the younger generation, watch TV has changed dramatically in recent years. With streaming video from YouTube, Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Instant, and other Internet-based services readily available on PCs, laptops, tablets, smartphones, and virtually any device with a display attached to it, does today's student even need a television?

The short answer is, no, a student doesn't necessarily need a TV in his or her dorm room. Inexpensive (and even free) video streaming services can provide hundreds of thousands of hours of video, enough to satisfy students with even the lightest of course loads.

But if you do decide to cut the TV out of the picture, make sure the device replacing it is up to the task. A tablet can provide ample entertainment for a single person, but for two or more, the screen may be too small. A PC monitor will tend to be larger than a tablet screen, but here too, size may become an issue if more than one viewer is present. We don't recommend replacing the TV with a smartphone; viewing, even alone, can strain the eyes after just a few minutes. AIO (all in one) computers, some of which can come with built-in TV tuners, may work well as a TV replacement.

The other problem with banishing the TV from the dorm room is the fact that game consoles tend to use HDMI cables for video output, and not all PC monitors support HDMI as an input option. If you want to use a game console, choose a PC monitor with at least one HDMI input. Even if you've already decided to buy a laptop, a large monitor can make for a vastly improved multitasking experience. Here, we recommend a monitor with a resolution of at least 1,920 X 1,080, which will ensure that any HD content viewed on it looks great.

right from the dorm room can be a real life- and time-saver. Without a printer, the student needs to copy documents, reports, and assignments to a flash drive and go elsewhere to print them out.

Modern printers come in all shapes and sizes, and many are designed for small spaces. You can also get inexpensive printers that are capable of printing, copying, scanning, and more in black and white and color.

Wireless printers can really cut down on the cable clutter and many models let you print wirelessly right from smartphones and tablets.

Storage Devices

No matter how much we tout cloud-based everything, will always be a need for simple storage that you can plug into a device, drag and drop files to, and physically carry and plug into another device. USB drives are currently available in capacities that rival internal hard drive capacities. USB 3.0 is a new protocol that enables lightning quick file transfers (as long as the source and destination computers all support the protocol).

Higher-capacity alternatives are available as external hard drives. These devices can be very compact as well, making it easy for a student to tuck hundreds of gigabytes' worth of data into a backpack for easy transport.

Networking Gear

After filling your shopping list with gadgets, it's easy to forget one of the most important components: the networking hardware that keeps all your Wi-Fi-capable electronics connected to the Internet and to each other.

Today's routers generally come standard with support for 802.11b/g/n, which should cover all your old and new components.



The Linksys EA6500 wireless router supports 802.11ac, which offers upward of 1,750MBps data rates and supports all the devices in the dorm room, frat or sorority house, and beyond.

Some even support the yet-tobe-finalized 802.11ac protocol, which boosts speeds up to 1GBps (gigabit per second) or more.

Modern routers also offer security protocols that can help you ensure that only authorized users can access the network and devices connected to it. WPA2 (Wi-Fi Protected Access) is the gatekeeper to your wireless network and an SPI (stateful packet inspection) firewall can block unsolicited incoming Internet traffic.

Some wireless routers also feature built-in USB ports, to which you can connect an external hard drive or USB drive. Drop files on here to be able to access them from any device connected (wired or wirelessly) to the router.

Calculators

For subjects that require fiddling with figures, nothing beats a dedicated calculator. The Texas Instruments TI-Nspire CX Graphing

Calculator, for instance features a 3.2-inch full-color screen, 100MB of built-in memory, and a USB port for connecting to a computer and interfacing with other scientific calculators.

A calculator offers several advantages over other devices: It'll handle any calculation you throw at it, the battery will last for days, and many of them feature dedicated programming tools and libraries. What's more, you can use them on most standardized tests.

CE School Supplies

How students learn has evolved over the last decade. Modern students have access to a universe of answers via the Internet. And their access to the Internet comes from all manner of devices. Hopefully, in this article and in the ones that follow, we'll have given you a good place to start when you go shopping this fall.

Soft Study

All The Back-To-School Software Your Student Needs

PCs, laptops, tablets, and smartphones can really make a difference for students, but without the right software, they might as well be fabulously expensive rocks. Cool, shiny rocks, mind you—but still just rocks. We'll describe some of the software that will help your favorite student succeed this semester.

e can all agree that software is the heart and soul of your computers and gadgets. In the following pages, we'll list the various software titles that are practically a prerequisite for academic success and point out the benefits of each. We'll include the ever-useful office suite and focus on the most important component applications included therein. Included as well are notetaking applications, design suites, imaging utilities, security suites you shouldn't browse the web without, and more.

We'll also describe some alternatives to traditional boxed software that you may not be aware of, including a handful of mobile and cloud-based applications.

Here too, we'll provide several examples of software titles that a student will find instrumental. For more information on specific titles, turn to the Software Buyer's Guide section of this magazine.

The Office Suite

When we think of productivity software, the venerable office suite is often the first thing to come to mind. A typical office suite is a collection of three or more core applications and often a handful of other utilities. The core of the office suite consists of the word processor, spreadsheet utility, and presentation-creation software.

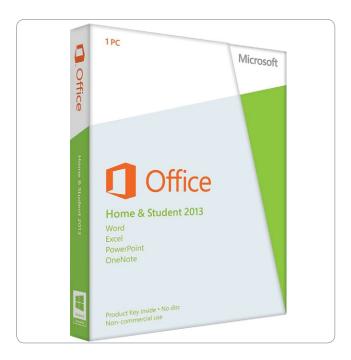
Other applications sometimes bundled with the core utilities



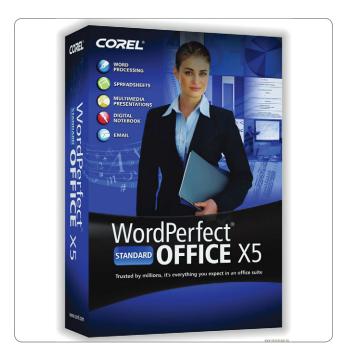
include a database application, graphics editor and viewer, desktop publishing app, email client, note-taking utility, project management software, and more.

What makes an office suite so attractive, other than its tendency to include several useful programs in a single package, is the unified interface. Each of the office suite's core applications is ideally suited to creating one kind of document, namely a text document, spreadsheet, and a presentation; but despite the differences, there are many functions that each utility shares. For instance, all three utilities have extensive text generating and layout tools that let you change the font, font style (bold, italic, underlined), letter size, justification, color, and numerous other attributes. Instead of having to determine how to adjust any of these items in three separate ways, all the utilities in an office suite share the same interface elements, menus, and options. If you know how to adjust them in the word processor, then chances are excellent you'll be just as adept a text editor in the spreadsheet and presentation utilities.

Another reason you should consider an office suite, even one that includes software you don't think



Microsoft Office 2013 is one of the more popular office suites available.



Corel WordPerfect Office X5 is another popular office suite; it's fully compatible with Microsoft Office file types.

you'll ever need, is price. When bundled together, the price of the office suite is almost always less than the cost of two or three of the individual utilities purchased separately.

And, to torture a phrase, it's always better to have a utility and not need it than to need one and not have it. You may not think vou'll ever use an email client or database software, but upon trying one or the other out, you may be surprised to find how useful they can be.

Word Processor

The word processor is one of the most commonly-used forms of productivity software. But don't let your apparent familiarity with it fool you into thinking the software is limited in its functionality. Modern word processors do more than let you type text onto a blank page; they also let you craft and format blog posts; use templates for agendas, letters, brochures, books, business cards, budgets, calendars, and even greeting cards; generate custom templates you can use again and again; modify existing templates; create your own stationery and letterhead; and more.

Most modern word processing software also lets you create documents in numerous formats or convert existing documents into the format of your choice. This simplifies document sharing across Windows, Mac, and mobile platforms.

Many word processors are designed to make sure that your work remains safe, by enabling auto save features by default. Some even include cloud-storage components, that let you upload your documents to the cloud, so you and any users you've granted access to the document can always log in and view or edit the latest version of the document.

Other common features of modern word processing software include built-in spell checking, grammar checking, a thesaurus, automatic text correction, and support for HTML exporting. Of special interest to students are word processors that help format citations according to various style guides.

Some of the more advanced features include extensive text markup tools, which are capable of tracking who made the changes and when, for all contributors to see. Many word processing applications also integrate graphics tools, charting elements, and support some form of mathematics calculations. Users can also download templates from the Web to use in the word processor, significantly multiplying the utility's usefulness.

With so many uses, it's not hard to see why a word processor should be on every student's short list of necessary software.

Spreadsheet Makers

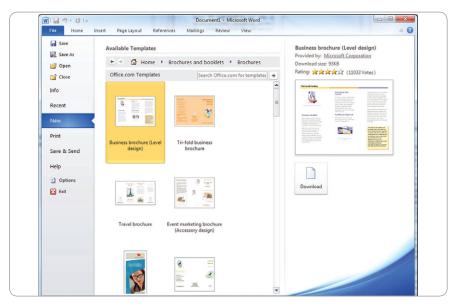
Spreadsheet software evolved from computerized accounting worksheets, which display figures in vertical and horizontal boxes, or cells. Users can input either text or figures into the cells, and even plug in formulas to perform calculations between two or more numbers in the cells.

Spreadsheet software also typically lets you generate multiple tabbed pages within each document, and enable formulas to calculate figures from cells on different tabs.

But spreadsheets aren't just about figures and text, they're also great for generating graphs, tables, charts, and other visual elements. Such elements are useful for adding immediate value to bland figures, especially in financial and statistical documents.

For instance, a budget spreadsheet could contain all of a small business's monthly expenses broken down by category. Using a different tab for each month and inserting a pie chart on each tab, the user could track what portion of the monthly expenditures are going to which categories, and track how those change throughout the course of the year. Such a spreadsheet could be used to track seasonal expenses, cut expenses, extrapolate potential expenses following an expansion of operations, and countless other applications.

Like word processing software, spreadsheets also tend to include access to a wide range of templates, in which you can simply plug in the values to get a desired



Templates in office suites let you quickly churn out professional-looking documents in a variety of formats.

type of document. Some common spreadsheet software templates include agendas, budgets, calendars, expense reports, forms, inventories, invoices, receipts, time sheets, schedules, recipes, statements, and more.

If you thought spreadsheets were all about accounting, you may be surprised by how versatile these applications can be.

Presentation Software

Nothing elicits groans as universally as the prospect of a slide show for those in academia and the business world alike. But don't blame sleep-inducing slide shows on the presentation-making software; the latest versions of these applications include a number of functions that can help users keep the audience engaged. After all, a well-made presentation can convey a large amount of information to an audience of almost any size in a compelling and visually interesting way.

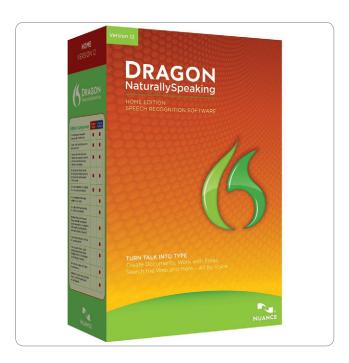
Presentation software lets users add text boxes, images, animations, sounds, and more to blank slides one at a time. Common features include access to a handful of slide transition effects (cut, fade, wipe, dissolve, etc.), and a range of text formatting and layout tools. Users can also change the amount of time each slide is displayed for automatic playback, or set the slide show to only advance slides manually.

Themes are another important feature of presentation software; they let users quickly apply a certain look to a slideshow. Themes consist of colors, fonts, text sizes, text alignments, and effects.

Because they're so visual, presentation software tends to have some fairly robust imaging tools for including photos, screen shots, clip art, shapes, charts, and video clips.

Note-Taking Utilities

Students are sure to appreciate any software that streamlines the process of organizing ideas, taking notes, and jotting down items you just don't want to forget. Modern note-taking software can resemble word processing software on the surface, but note-taking applications differ in that they automatically save as you write.



Dragon Naturally Speaking's voice-to-text engine lets you dictate notes (and emails, papers, etc.) rather than type them.



Adobe Photoshop CS6 is an advanced image editing and graphics generation tool popular among professionals and advanced students.

Another great thing about this kind of software is its accessibility. The best note-taking software gives you a desktop application you can use from a notebook or PC, as well as a web-based version that you can use from the mobile device of your choice. Some even have dedicated mobile apps for iOS, Android, BlackBerry, Windows Phone, and more.

One of the great benefits of using note-taking software on mobile devices is the touch-based input, which lets you write notes with your finger or a stylus. Many of these applications then use character recognition technology to convert your longhand into text. You can also draw arrows, circle items, highlight phrases, and even doodle in the margins if you think that'll help.

Another common feature of current note-taking software is the ability to share notes and add multiple contributors, so small groups can contribute to the document. Cloud sync ensures that every contributor is looking at the most up-to-date version.

Dictation software also falls into this category; it is capable of converting spoken words into text, on-the-fly. You can use this type of software to record lectures or your own dictation, up to three times faster than typing. Some dictation software features mobile apps or come bundled with digital recorders. Besides being fast and easy, dictation software lets you put the pen down and put the keyboard away to reduce the chances of suffering from a repetitive stress injury.

Design & Imaging Tools

Software in this category is available for anywhere the rock-bottom price of free all the way up to \$1,000 or more. As a result, make sure you know the features you need before your pull the trigger on one of the more expensive suites. (They're worth the money, but not if you don't use the features they provide.)

As with productivity software, you can buy photo editors, video creation, layout and design, and drafting software as separate products, or get them all together as a suite. We recommend buying just the one you need unless your student is looking for a career in the visual arts or design field. Rarely will he or she need every product in some of the more advanced suites. The professionalgrade software in this category can be extremely powerful, but you may need to follow in-depth tutorials, buy instructional software, or browse forums and Web-based tutorials to perform the same feats as the pros.

Security Software

Most Internet-capable devices your student intends to use on campus should have some form of software protection. It's not that complicated: The basic rule of thumb is that if you can install apps on it, you need to protect it.

Smartphones and tablets that run iOS, Android, BlackBerry OS, and Windows Phone all offer apps designed to secure the respective devices against malware and viruses. It's true that closed ecosystems like Apple's iOS offer fewer avenues for infection than open ones, such as Google's Android, but don't be fooled: Either type of device can become infected.

Mobile devices can download mobile scanners that are capable of scanning apps as they're installed. Some of the more advanced mobile security apps can even alert you to questionable app permissions and privacy risks, even if the apps themselves don't register as malware.



Your student will need protection for his or her desktop or laptop.

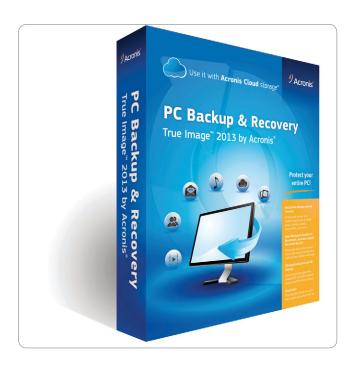
As far as securing your PC or laptop is concerned, Windows 8-based systems come with basic antivirus and malware protection already installed, although Windows 7 systems lack the former unl;ess you've installed protection. In both instances, you can get more sophisticated protection from third-party software.

Soft On The Wallet

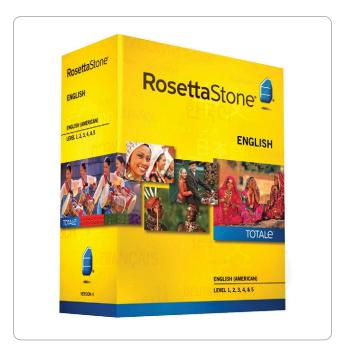
Student/Educator Versions Lighten The Burden

Being a student is hard work, and maintaining a full time job while keeping those grades up can quickly compound the problem. And then there's dealing with the ballooning costs of textbooks, tuition, and room and board. Thankfully, there's a host of software available to students (and others) for significantly less than you might expect. And we're not talking about bargain-bin bundles either: There are student discounts or student versions available on suites from Microsoft, Corel, Adobe, and more. Here are some of our favorite inexpensive software options for students.

- Microsoft Office Home & Student 2013 (Windows/Mac)
- Microsoft Office 365 University (Windows/Mac)
- Adobe Photoshop & Premiere Elements 11 Student & Teacher Edition (Windows/Mac)
- Adobe Photoshop CS6 Extended Student & Teacher Edition (Windows/Mac)
- WordPerfect Office X5 Home & Student (Windows)



Backup and recovery software is essential for anyone who handles irreplaceable data.



You don't need to be in a classroom to learn a new language. Do it from your sofa with language learning software.

In addition to including licenses for multiple computers, many modern security suites also include apps to secure your tablet and smartphone.

Mobile devices may need another layer of security in the form of device location and remote wipe technology, which lets you recover or destroy the data on a lost or stolen device. Important features to look for here include the ability to force the device to make a loud notification so you can find it if it's nearby, use the device's GPS to help you locate it, or hide the software's existence from a thief who will likely attempt to disable security measures.

System utility and maintenance software may be a good way to restore your system in the event of a major malfunction or to help get an aging system into shape. These utilities are designed to help you clear unnecessary files from your computer, tie up loose ends in the Windows Registry, and to disable resource-hogging applications.

Educational Apps

You don't need to be paying tuition to be a student; there's a wide range of software currently available that can effectively increase your knowledge or broaden your skill set. For the most part, almost any software you buy will come with some form of tutorial, but some learning resources are better than others.

Some professional-grade applications assume your proficiency is already fairly high. For these applications, you can often find supplementary software that gives you audio visual tutorials that will help you master the ins and outs of the software. Best of all, these learning tools tend to be relatively affordable. (User groups and online forums also help here.)

Communications

Email, translation, and chat software is a necessity for any student. Although there are free versions of many of these tools, the paid versions tend to offer more features and better support.

Other types of software you may find useful include email repair and recovery software, telepresence suites, and VoIP phone apps.

Smart Resources

About the worst thing you can do is blow your budget on hardware and accessories and forget to set some aside for software. The applications you install are what inform your overall experience with your devices. With the right software installed, success is just a matter of making use of the tools at your disposal. Without that software, the fancy hardware is a waste of money.

Accessories For Success

Indispensable Incidentals For Back-To-School

Whether it's time to hit the books or have fun, gadgets and software can quickly become a student's study buddy. But don't forget to pick up the cases, backpacks, satchels, adapters, chargers, stands, protectors, headsets, and other goodies that pair perfectly with all your new hardware.

any of the accessories you require are ultimately determined by the hardware you buy. For instance, to make sure your smartphone doesn't suffer from any warranty-voiding mishaps (hint: almost all mishaps will void your warranty), buy a screen protector and case. To keep from getting caught driving while dialing, invest in a handsfree bluetooth kit, or rock out with a studio-quality headset with a built-in microphone that lets you answer calls whenever they occur.

In the following sections, we'll list several student-appropriate accessories that are designed to make the hardware you buy more functional, portable, and comfortable to use. Accessories can also make your gadgets safer, cooler, better-looking, and more durable.

We'll illustrate various examples of accessories that fit into each category and explain why you might need each one. If you want more specific product information, you'll find it in the Buyer's Guide sections of this issue.

Desktop Accessories

The core accessories you'll need for a desktop computer include a mouse, keyboard, speakers, and most likely a mouse pad. Regarding mice and keyboards, there is an endless array of choices available to you. For students in a cramped dorm room, a compact



The Corsair Vengeance K60 is a mechanical keyboard that's fun to type or game on.

keyboard may be suitable, but larger keyboards can offer a more comfortable typing experience when working on lengthy projects. There are two types of keyboards you'll encounter, rubber membrane and mechanical keyboards. The former tend to require very little force to register a key press; these types of keyboards are very common, and tend to be less expensive. Mechanical keyboards feature individual switches beneath each key; as a result, they tend to cost more. The big difference here is that each key requires more force, but the feedback (some switches generate a distinct clicking sound) can make

for a more satisfying, deliberate typing experience that users tend to appreciate. The best way to determine which you prefer is to get hands-on with the two keyboard types to see which feels better.

Gaming keyboards are also popular with students, and many have the added benefit of having backlit keys, which makes it possible to continue typing, long after the roommate has fallen asleep.

Mice also come in a variety of types and styles. Optical and laser mice are great because they don't require regular cleaning, like the old ball-style mice. Those studying the visual arts or drafting may want to choose a mouse with a



Cyber Acoustics CA-2880 USB Powered Speaker clips to your laptop's screen for a significantly improved audio experience.



The Cooler Master NotePal ErgoStand Cooling Stand can keep your 17-inch or smaller laptop running cool and quiet.

high dpi (dots per inch) resolution and adjustable sensitivity (laser mice tend to have both features). This enables users to adjust the speed and precision of the pointer's onscreen movement.

PC speakers too can vary wildly; you can get compact stereo speakers that attach discreetly to your monitor, room-filling sound from a 2.1-channel speaker system, or fully immersive surround sound experience from a 5.1-channel speaker system. The amount of space you have to work with is one of the biggest factors to consider when choosing a large system. Surround sound speaker systems often require that speakers be placed behind the listener, which may not be possible in a small apartment or dorm room. Headsets are the perfect way to get a quality listening experience without forcing those around you to listen as well.

Other desktop computer accessories to consider include external hard drives, screen filters, and external optical drives for burning media or watching Blu-ray Disc movies on your computer.

Laptop Accessories

Although laptops will have a built-in keyboard and pointing device, getting a standalone mouse and keyboard can bring many of the comforts of the desktop world to your portable.

If you plan to use the laptop in one place a majority of the time, only occasionally taking it with you, we'd recommend getting a laptop dock. A typical laptop dock lets you connect multiple USB devices (such as a mouse, keyboard, and flash drive), a display, and possibly memory cards. Generally speaking, you will get more features if you opt for a unit built to work with your laptop, for

instance, dedicated power delivered through a proprietary docking port. There are universal docks available, however, and they tend to be less expensive than the model-specific varieties, yet still offer many of the same features.

Laptops can get hot, and as we often mention in these pages, heat is your electronics' worst enemy. Cool off your laptop with a laptop cooler, which slips under the unit and directs a current of cool air over the laptop's vents, to keep everything running smooth and reliably for as long as possible. Many laptop coolers also act as stands, letting you angle the unit for a more comfortable typing and viewing experience.

Portability may be the reason you opted to buy a laptop, but it's also the reason criminals like to snatch these devices. To thwart thieves, buy a cable lock, which wrap around a stationary object



The Kensington Combination Ultra Laptop Lock can make sure your laptop stays right where you put it.



Use the Samsung HM1200 Bluetooth headset to take and make calls hands-free.

like an immovable desk, and fit into the lock slot (sometimes called a Kensington security slot or K-slot) on most laptops.

Buying spare batteries and power adapters can also make using a laptop where and whenever more convenient.

If you plan to use your laptop for slide shows in a group setting, a presentation remote with a built-in laser pointer can make things incredibly simple.

Laptop bags are another essential accessory. Most come with multiple pockets for carrying a mouse, spare battery, extra cables, power cords, thumb drives, a headset, and more. If you have a large laptop, focus extra attention on how comfortable the bag you intend to buy is to carry.

If your laptop lacks an optical drive, consider getting an external unit to enable media burning, CD playback and ripping, and DVD

and Blu-ray Disc viewing. You can find large units designed to reside on a desk most of the time, or compact optical drives that are just as portable as your laptop.

Smartphone Accessories

No smartphone is safe from the occasional drop, bump, scratch, or jolt. To make sure the screen survives unscathed, buy and apply a screen protector. A smartphone case can also mitigate any damages that may result from dropping the unit. Some cases can even protect your device from liquid submersion and high-impact drops. (Expect to pay more for a smartphone case that offers this kind of extra protection.) Cases are also a great way to add some personality to your device; they come in dozens of colors, hundreds of designs, and may be adorned with sports team logos, animals, and countless other decorative touches.

A car adapter designed for your phone, or a generic USB adapter that lets you use the USB charging cable that came with your device, can ensure that you have power whenever you're on the road.

Compact headsets with built-in microphones let you have a conversation while driving or performing other activities. A Bluetooth kit can also let you get where you're going without having to look at your phone to make and take calls.

Bluetooth speakers and headsets also make listening to music and making and taking calls a fussfree endeavor. When shopping for Bluetooth accessories, make sure your smartphone supports the same or later version of Bluetooth listed on the accessory packaging.

Other smartphone accessories you might want to purchase include a tripod for taking professionallooking photos, a screen-cleaning spray and microfiber cloth, spare batteries, a multi-device charging station, a cradle or dock for quick charging or music playback, and a car mount, which lets you use your smartphone like a GPS and stereo system in one.

Tablet Accessories

One tablet accessory that should make every new tablet owner's shopping list is a case. You will find folio cases that fold over the screen and prop up the unit for desktop use, plastic and rubber cases that fit your tablet snugly, cases with built-in screen covers, zippered sleeves lined with microfiber, and more. The key here is to get a case designed for your tablet and its dimensions. Universal cases exist. but they may not allow unrestricted use of the front and back cameras, microphone, and charging port.

Like smartphones, a tablet with a scratched screen will never look quite right; guard against gashes with a screen protector.

A stylus isn't necessary for most tablets, but some tablets are capable of registering more precise input with a stylus. A stylus is especially important if the tablet is going to be used by a student studying drafting, design, or digital art.

One of the more useful tablet accessories is a keyboard attachment. These typically connect to your tablet either via Bluetooth or via the tablet's proprietary connector. Keyboards are often compact for easy transport; some even come bundled in folio cases that help protect the tablet. The benefit of having a standalone keyboard attached to your tablet is a significantly more comfortable typing experience and the ability to input text without obscuring part of the screen with the device's native onscreen keyboard.

If you're using an e-reader, particularly one with an e-ink screen that requires direct light to enable



The 2GB Sky wifi smartpen from Livescribe helps you record lectures and digitize your notes.

viewing, then getting an attachable book light can greatly improve your low-light reading experience.

Spare chargers (including car chargers) and cables can also come in handy for anyone who uses a tablet often.

Accessory Potpourri

We commonly think of accessories as add-ons designed to improve other products, but they can just as easily be stand alone products designed to make your life, or in this case, the life of a student, better, easier, or more enjoyable.

One such gizmo is the Livescribe Smartpen, which works just like a normal pen, but which is capable of remembering everything you write and draw, recording audio of lectures and interviews, and letting you play back that audio over a built-in speaker. The OLED (organic light emitting diode) screen lets you explore and execute the Smartpen's various functions. Upload digital files of everything to your PC or to the Web, share it, and refer back to your notes with the aid of extensive search and text editing tools.

The flash drive is another of those accessories that no student should ever be without. They're useful for transferring data between desktops, laptops, and tablets. They're also available in capacities up to 128GB, with capacious 16GB models available for less than \$30.

Cream Of The Crop

Accessories are easy to find, but with so many choices, sometimes the trick is finding the ones that'll actually improve your experience with a given device. We hope this guide has helped you winnow down the list of available accessories by pointing out the most necessary and useful among them.



Don't Limit Your Tablet Experience

For Improved Compatibility & Battery Life, Get Intel Inside®

Tablets with Intel® Atom processors offer more versatility and performance than your average slate, because Intel®-based processors can handle the full-featured apps you need to get the job done, and can smoothly and easily run powerful operating systems such as Windows 8 and Android.

ith an Intel®-based tablet, there's no need to find cumbersome workarounds or carry multiple devices just to get some work done.

Flexibility

Intel® Atom processors support multitasking with standard productivity apps like word processing and spreadsheet programs, so you'll be able to use the tablet for real-world work-related tasks. The 11.6-inch Lenovo IdeaTab Lynx, for instance, features a 1.8GHz dual-core Atom processor and can effortlessly move between presentations and HD video.

Productivity

Thanks to its impressive battery life, the Intel® Atom processor delivers all-day operation, so you won't need to interrupt your workday to charge the tablet during use. For example, the Acer ICONIA W3-810-1416 offers up to 8 hours of battery life.

Intel® Atom processor-based tablets can easily handle typical business tasks, including email communications, document creation, and video conferencing. The ICONIA W3-810-1416 comes with Microsoft Office Home & Student 2013, and since it runs Windows 8, you'll be able to install just about everything you need for work.

Rich Media

We've gotten used to enjoying HD quality video at home, and Intel®



The Acer ICONIA W3-810-1416 features an Intel® dual-core processor that runs at 1.8GHz and comes with 2GB of memory and 64GB of internal storage.

ensures that it can be enjoyed on your tablet, too. The Acer ICO-NIA W3-810-1416 supports 720p playback and its micro HDMI port lets you easily share video and presentations with others. Of course, many Intel®-based tablets

come with HD cameras that let you capture great home videos and chat with friends in real-time.

And for even better performance, be sure to check out tablets with Intel Core processors.

Connectivity

Tablets allow you to stay in touch, and Intel®-based tablets come with tools for getting online, transferring files, and finding nearby places. Acer's ICONIA W3-810-1416 comes with Connected Standby that checks for new email and updates when the system is in Standby. You'll also have access to many of the cloud-based applications that you use for work. For example, the Lenovo IdeaTab Lynx comes with both Lenovo Cloud and SkyDrive, and you can also download other apps to enhance your tablet experience.



Selecting Your Next Computer From Tablet To Ultrabook™

Choose The On-The-Go Solution That's Right For You

Confused about which computer is best for you? This chart breaks down the functional differences among tablet, laptop, all-in-one, and Ultrabook™ options. As you can see, an Ultrabook™ provides you with the best of all possible worlds, as you'll enjoy best features of a laptop combined with the sleek design and portability of a tablet. Of course, you might want the PC for very specific uses, so check our chart to find out what's best for you.

	What Are Your Needs?	Tablet	Laptop	All-in-one	Ultrabook™
Portability	Less than an inch thick	√			✓
	All-day battery life	√			✓
	Convertible styles	Detachable and wireless keyboard			Detachable, flip, slider, and swivel
Office Productivity	Email, video chat, and instant messaging	/	/	/	/
	Full size screen & key- board		√	✓	✓
	Efficiently create, edit, and multitask		√	1	✓
Entertainment	Watch, play, and listen to multimedia	√	√	/	✓
	Smooth HD playback		√	1	✓
	Wireless multimedia streaming	✓	1	1	✓
	Large screen (18"+)			✓	
Powerful Extras	Wakes up in a flash	√			/
	Speed boost when you need it		With an Intel Core i5 or i7 processor	With an Intel Core i5 or i7 processor	✓
	Built in security to keep files and identity safe				✓

Canon



Did you know?

You can easily print on CDs and DVDs with the PIXMA MX922. It even comes with software to help make your printed discs look amazing.







www.ibuypower.com

Gaming Desktop PC

iBuyPower Power ST702

The iBuyPower Power ST702 Gaming Desktop PC is more than capable of handling any computing task you set before it.

- Intel 3rd Generation Quad Core i5-3570K 3.4GHz and 6MB L3 Cache Processor, plus Turbo Boost Technology. Enjoy an automatic burst of speed when you need it with Intel® Turbo Boost Technology 2.0
- 8GB DDR3 1333MHz PC3-10600 Installed Memory, expandable to 16GB
- 500GB 7200rpm SATA HDD
- Super Multi DVD Burner Optical Drive
- · Windows 7 Home Premium (64-bit)





iBuyPower Power ST702 Model: ST702 Staples Item: 163905

Hardware

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Printer, Scanner, Fax, and Copier

Brother Inkjet All-In-One Printer

Stop cluttering your desk with different devices and try this handy four-in-one printer instead. This impressive machine has everything that you need to finish your work, from an inkjet printer to a high-quality scanner.

- · Prints 12 ppm black, 10 ppm color; copies 6 cpm black, 6 cpm color (ISO-based)
- Built-in wireless 802.11b/g/n network and USB 2.0 interfaces
- Automatic duplex printing (2-sided printing)
- Prints up to 6000 x 1200dpi resolution
- 4-cartridge ink system
- Direct photo printing on demand from your media cards, PictBridge-enabled camera, or USB flash memory drive



Brother® Inkiet All-in-One Printer Model: MFCJ625DW Staples Item: 358114



www.samsung.com/us

Makes An Impact And A Statement — With Style

Samsung Series 9 15" Laptop

The Samsung Series 9 NP900X4C is striking to look at, but it also sets a premium performance standard. With extremely fast startup speeds and nearly instant resume from sleep, the Series 9 lets you get even more done and leaves every other PC behind.

- 3rd generation Intel® Core™ i5-3317U 1.7GHz plus Turbo Boost Technology 3MB L3 Cache Processor; enjoy an automatic burst of speed when you need it with Intel® Turbo Boost Technology 2.0
- 8GB DDR3 1600MHz Memory
- · 128GB Solid State Drive
- 15" HD+ LED Display (1600 x 900)
- Windows 8





Samsung Series 9 Model: NP900X4C-A06US Staples Item: 985041

Hardware

www.linksys.com

Provides Gigabit Wi-Fi Gpeeds

Cisco® Linksys Router Wireless

This 1750 Mbps wireless router with six antennas accompanied by high-power amplifiers lets you take advantage of its ultimate range; as a result, your Wi-Fi signal will reach areas traditional routers cannot reach.

- Up to 1750Mbps, IEEE 802.11a/b/g/n/ac compatible, 2.4GHz + 5GHz frequency band
- WPA2, WPS security, 4 x 10base T/100Base TX/1000base T, RJ 45 LAN ports, 2 x USB ports
- Built with the latest Draft 802.11ac wireless technology for speeds approximately 3x faster than Wireless N
- · Security features: SPI, guest network, parental controls
- · Ethernet technology: Gigabit ethernet
- Network technology: 10/100/1000base T
- Management: Web-based management, remote management



Cisco® Linksys Wireless Router Model: EA6500 Staples Item: IM1PN6862



www.Google.com/nexus

The Playground is Open

Nexus 7 Tablet from Google

Nexus 7 (32 GB), from Google™ runs on Android 4.2 operating system, so you won't have to worry about installing or upgrading expensive operating systems. It has a vivid seven-inch 1280x800 high-resolution display, coated with scratch-resistant Corning glass, which protects your touchscreen from drops and dings.

- Built to bring you the best of Google in a slim, portable package that fits perfectly in your hand
- 7-inch display brings your entertainment to life in stunning clarity on a vibrant 1280x800 high-resolution display protected by scratch-resistant Corning® glass
- Over 9 hours of HD video playback, 10 hours of Web browsing, 10 hours of reading, and up to 300 hours of stand-by time, so you spend less time charging





Google Nexus / Model: NEXUS7ASUS-1B32 Staples item: 100604

Hardware

www.microsoft.com

A laptop in tablet form

Microsoft Surface Pro Enjoy fast, powerful performance

A laptop in tablet form, Surface Pro brings together the best of Microsoft in one awesome new device.

- Precision crafted and made with VaporMg, Surface to be tough yet
- Windows 8 Pro and 1-month trial of Office 365 for new customers
- BitLocker encrypts your hard drive's data, helping to keep your
- 16:9 widescreen/ClearType full HD display with 1080p resolution
- A microSDXC card slot lets you add up to 64GB of extra storage
- Front and rear-facing 720p HD video cameras
- Stream as much as you like on your PC, tablet, Windows Phone, and Xbox 360



Surface Pro, 64GB Model: 9SR-00001 Staples Item: 147834



www.www.htc.com/us

Reshape Your Smartphone Experience

HTC One® at 4G LTE speeds

Stream all your favorite content live onto one screen with HTC BlinkFeed™. Great sound with HTC BoomSound™ with dual frontal speakers and built-in amplifiers. HTC Zoe™ brings photos to life with Living Gallery. HTC SenseTV™ is your interactive TV guide and remote control.

- 4.7" Full HD 1080p, 468ppi touch screen display
- · Internal memory storage: Up to 32GB
- 1.7GHz quad-core processor
- AndroidTM v4.1 (Jelly Bean)
- 2GB DDR2 RAM
- Chipset: Qualcomm® Snapdragon™ 600
- Beats Audio™: Studio quality enhanced sound by Beats Audio



HTC One® Mobile Phone Model: HTC One Silver Staples Item: 193560



Hardware

www.HP.com

Convertible Touch Screen Laptop

HP ENVY x2 11-g010nr 11.6"

The HP Envy X2 is a Staples Windows 8 Select PC representing the best in design, mobility, and performance. The X2 sports a thin aluminum body that quickly switches from a notebook to a tablet and back again with its full size keyboard attachment, adapting to your needs with ease.

- Intel® Atom™ Z2760 Cache Processor
- On-board 2GB 533MHz LPDDR2 SDRAM
- 64GB solid-state drive
- HD Anti-glare LED-backlit IPS Display (1366 x 768)
- Windows 8





HP ENVY x2 11-g010nr Model: C2K61UA#ABA Staples Item: 120527

www.corsair.com

Mechanical Gaming Keyboard

Corsair Vengeance K60 ch-9000004-NA

The Corsair Vengeance CH-9000004-NA K60 Performance FPS Mechanical Gaming Keyboard is designed for performance gaming and has a cherry MX red key switches, which provides the sensitivity and low operating force that professional gamers love.

- Connectivity technology: Cable
- · Host interface: USB 2.0
- Black/silver
- Features: Ergonomic wrist rest, soft-touch keys; cherry MX red mechanical key switches; contoured, textured WASD and 1-6 keycaps; full key matrix anti-ghosting; 20-key rollover (20KRO) on USB; english localization; Windows lock keys.





Accessories

www.samsung.com/us

Up To 8 Hours Of Talk Time Samsung HM1200 Bluetooth Headset

Simple and straightforward, the HM1200 Bluetooth® mono headset provides the outstanding call clarity on which Samsung earned its reputation. In addition to the userfriendly features, this headset is compact and stylish, with its modern, textured finish. The HM1200 blends simplicity and quality to deliver tremendous value.

- Multipoint technology
- · Up to 3000 hours of standby time
- · 3.0 Bluetooth
- Dimensions: 48.49 X 19.99 X 11.8 mm
- · Up to 33 ft. operating range



Samsung HM1200 Bluetooth Headset Model: BHM1200NBACSTA

Staples Item: 398479



www.kensington.com

Six Foot Carbon Strengthened Steel Cable

Kensington Combination Ultra Laptop Lock

The Kensington Combination Ultra Laptop Lock features a superior strength lockhead to resist tampering. Its pushbutton design for one-handed operation easily installs the lock. The keyless four-wheel combination can be easily reset and offers 10, 000 possible combinations.

- · Superior strength lockhead to resist tampering
- · Pushbutton design for one-handed operation to easily install lock
- Keyless four-wheel combination can be easily reset
- · Choose from 10, 000 possible combinations
- Anchors to desk, table, or any fixed surface
- Attaches to laptop via the Kensington security slot found in 99% of portable computers



Kensington[®]

Accessories

www.coolermaster-usa.com

Silent 140 mm Fan Cooler Master® NotePal ErgoStand Cooling Stand

ErgoStand Basic - a budget-friendly alternative solution that can provide you with cooler notebook computer temperatures and extensive control over workplace ergonomics.

- Supports laptops up to 17"
- · Five-position height adjustment allows you to select the most suitable position for viewing / typing angles
- Fan Dimensions: 15 mm (H) x 140 mm (W) x 140 mm (D)
- Fan speed: 1400(+/- 15%) rpm / Fan airflow: 65 cfm
- · Fan noise level: 21 dBA
- USB: 1 x USB 2.0/1.1
- Power supply: USB 5 VDC





Cooler Master Cooling Stand Model: R9-NBS-4UBK Staples Item: IM1PW2372

www.cyberacoustics.com

Laptop Speaker Bar

Cyber Acoustics USB Powered Portable Speaker

The CA-2880 laptop speaker bar is perfect for movie watchers and music listeners on the go. Powered by USB, there's no need for external power, thus creating a single-cable experience that reduces clutter. The 1.5" drivers make for a solid listening experience, and the laptop clip is suitable for the portable lifestyle. Travel is made easier with the CA-2880 laptop speaker bar.

- Convenient desktop volume control and on/off
- LED power indicator
- · Portable design for easy carry away
- Carry pouch
- Attach on your laptop by the clip configuration
- Dimensions: 8.25" W x 2.5" H x 1.25" D





Cyber Acoustics USB Powered Portable Speaker Model: CA-2880 Staples Item: 903790

Accessories

www.Livescribe.com

Your Words. Your Ideas. Any Time, Anywhere.

Livescribe[™] Sky 2GB Wifi Smartpen

The Sky wifi smartpen is the perfect pen for today's alwayson, connected world. It syncs all your handwritten notes and any recorded audio to your free Evernote account, allowing you to have quick and easy access to the information that matters to you, any time, and anywhere. Now, all your important notes, graphs, and diagrams are at the tip of your fingers, so you can review, search, and organise your notes from Evernote on any of the devices you use, including PC, Mac, iOS, and Android devices.

- Smartpen Remembers So You Don't Have To
- From Paper, Directly To Your Digital World
- Any Time, Anywhere Access To Your Notes





Livescribe Sky 2GB wifi Smartpen Model: APX00010S Staples item: 120933





GOLD 1

Pay and Get Paid -Anywhere, Anytime!

Total Payment Automation for Home and Office

- Create checks and electronic payments*
- Accept payments with no transaction fees
- Use stand-alone or with QuickBooks®, Quicken®, Peachtree and other accounting software
- Manage your finances



NEW! Pay and Get Paid by Checks, eChecks and Direct Deposit (ACH) anywhere, anytime.







VersaCheck® - The Complete Payment Solution







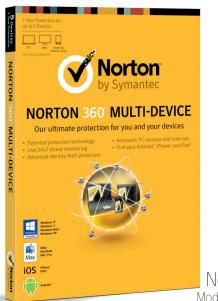






www.norton.com

Ultimate Protection for you and your devices Norton 360[™] Multi-Device



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Provides a single, integrated solution that protects you from threats and your mobile devices from loss

Norton 360 Model: 21264472 Staples Item: 957446

Norton 360™ Multi-Device brings together powerful PC, Mac®, Android™, iPhone®, and iPad® protection to deliver a single, straightforward solution that protects you on the various devices you use. With Norton 360 Multi-Device, there's no need to cobble together separate protection products on your own. It lets you safely surf, shop, share, socialize, and bank online, no matter which device you use.

- EXCLUSIVE! Norton Protection System: Our five patented layers of protection detect and eliminate PC threats more quickly and accurately than other technologies.
- Network Defense Layer Protection: Stops online threats before they can reach your computer.
- NEW! Threat-Removal Layer: Targets and eliminates hard-to-remove threats less sophisticated products often miss.
- NEW! Scam Insight: Reviews a website's reputation and lets you know if it is safe to enter your personal information, so you can be confident it won't be stolen by cybercriminals.
- EXCLUSIVE! Norton Management: Cloud-based controls let you install, manage, fix, update, and renew Norton 360™ Multi-Device on all of your devices over the Internet with a few simple clicks.
- **EXCLUSIVE!** Parental Controls Management: Lets you access Norton Online Family through Norton 360.
- Norton Identity Safe: Remembers, secures, and automatically enters your user names and passwords for you.
- Automatic Backup: Backs up your photos, music, and other important files only when you're not using your PC, so it won't get in your way and you don't have to remember to do it.
- PC Tuneup: Fixes common computer problems, frees up memory, removes unnecessary files, and cleans up your hard drive.



www.kaspersky.com

The Ultimate Protection

Kaspersky PURE 3.0 Total Security

Award-winning protection against all Internet threats: Kaspersky's innovative hybrid approach to protection combines the real-time efficiency of the cloud with security technologies on your PC to deliver a more effective response to today's threats.

- Safe Money adds even stronger security for online banking, shopping
- Automatic Exploit Prevention: Even if your PC's applications haven't been updated with the latest fixes
- · Safeguards your digital identity & privacy
- · Scheduled backup protects your photos, music, and financial data
- Encrypted vaults securely store valuable files
- · Easy, central security management of multiple PCs
- · PC clean-up tools keep your system running smoothly
- · Award-winning parental control



Kaspersky PURE 3.0 Total Security Model: P7DC7K2FJQ6UZUB Staples Item: 167670



Software

www.MICROSOFT.com

Mobility Meets Productivity Office 245

Office 365 Access Your Work From Anywhere

Microsoft has redesigned Office 365 to reflect where, when, and how you work, so you'll be able to communicate and collaborate anywhere—using the trusted, powerful tools provided by Office.

- SkyDrive is your own personal cloud where you can store all the documents, photos, videos and other important files you need.
- Each active Office 365 Home Premium and Office 365
 University subscription is entitled to 60 Skype world minutes per month, which can be used to make Skype calls to phones in over 60 countries /regions.
- Use Digital Notebook to capture, organize and share data encountered while web browsing.
- Compatible with Windows 8 and touchscreens making it ideal for your new Windows 8 tablet.





Microsoft Office 365 Model: 6GQ-00024 Staples item: 122565

www.Adobe.com

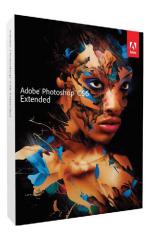
Edit Video Faster

Adobe Premiere Pro CS6 1-user download

Adobe Premiere Pro CS6 is the industry-leading crossplatform video editing application. Edit low-resolution to 5K and higher resolution footage with greater speed and precision without transcoding. Get stunning 64-bit performance, highly intuitive workflows, and enabled for timesaving Adobe integration as you deliver professional video for virtually any screen.

- · Take advantage of the most requested editing enhancements, including over 50 enhancements to smooth the transition for those switching from another NLE.
- New support for OpenCL on certain MacBook Pro computers brings GPU-accelerated workflows to Mac computer users, while support for NVIDIA Maximus dual-GPU systems delivers even more extreme performance.





Adobe Premiere PRO CS6 Model: YABDUXZHCYSU2MD Staples item: 954361

Software

www.nuance.com

Speech Recognition Software

Dragon NaturallySpeaking 12

Dragon NaturallySpeaking 12 Home Edition speech software recognizes what you say and how you say it, so you can turn talk into text and enjoy using your voice to command your PC and applications. Use your favorite applications to dictate documents, send email, search the Web, or network with friends and family.

- · Easy to install
- · Turn talk into text three times faster than typing with up to 99% recognition accuracy right out of the box
- · Say words and watch them appear on your computer screen
- Use Dragon 12 Home Edition with your favorite Windows applications
- · With the new interactive tutorial's simulations, you can learn and practice good dictation, correction, and editing habits



Dragon NaturallySpeaking 12 Model: 8099114 Staples Item: 960829



Avoid & Recover From Hacking

Best Practices & Tips For Staying Secure

You may think that your usernames and passwords are safe, but hackers have ways of gaining access to your supposedly "secret" information. For example, your PC could have spyware with a keylogger installed that provides the hacker with info about everything you enter using your keyboard, including your login information.

r, hackers can use a brute-force style of attack using password-cracking software that will attempt to log in using various combinations of words and numbers. These programs can try thousands of different combinations in seconds. And once the hackers break into a single account, such as your webmail, they can take a guess at your other login and password pairings to break into your other online accounts—or even steal your identity. We'll examine what you'll need to protect your digital life from intrusion.

Security Starts At Home

We talked with Gerry Egan, Senior Director Product Management at Symantec, about how you can protect yourself from hacking. He told us, "The first step is to install security software on all of your devices, including your PCs, Macs, and mobile devices. Security software is often the first defense against online threats and can detect and block most threats before they appear on your device. It's also important to ensure that your security software is active and has access to the Internet to download the latest virus definitions. Thousands of new malware variants are discovered every day, so falling behind on virus definitions updates for even a day or two can put your system at risk."

Note that to protect your PC, Mac, smartphones, and tablets, you'll want a security application designed specifically for use on both desktop and mobile devices. For example, Norton 360 Multi-Device (us.norton.com) provides protection for up to five devices running Windows (XP, Vista, 7 & 8), Mac (OS X 10.7 or 10.8), Android smartphones and tablets, and iPhones and iPads. Ensure that all of the applications on your computers and mobile devices are up-to-date, because software developers routinely fix bugs and vulnerabilities that hackers can use to infiltrate your PC. It's most important that you keep the operating system up-to-date, because it's the most common target for hackers.

Avoid Pop-Ups & Email Links

It may seem obvious, but be sure to avoid clicking on website pop-ups and also on links in emails from unknown entities—and even in emails that purport to be from someone you know. Egan told us, "Malicious software is commonly installed when users inadvertently install a program sent to them in an email."



Norton 360 Multi-Device works on all kinds of computers and mobile devices.



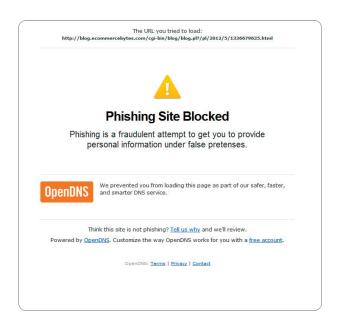
Symantec's SONAR technology uses behavior protection to actively monitor your PC for suspicious malware activity.

To prevent identity theft, it's best to limit the amount of information you make public on social networking websites. "While it may seem harmless, every bit of information about you can be valuable to a hacker trying to gain access to your accounts, particularly something that may give an attacker a hint as to one of your account passwords. Check up on your privacy settings as well, to make sure you know who has access to which information," says Egan.

Why You Want A Suite

Modern security suites offer more than just traditional antivirus protection; that's because today's threats require a more robust, all-around defense. For example, most security suites provide you with a firewall, a piece of software that determines which network traffic is allowed to enter and leave your PC, as well as providing protection against some forms of spyware and viruses. When comparing security software, check out the extras added by the software provider. Egan told us that Norton Internet Security offers "Vulnerability and IPS (Intrusion Protection) to look for signs of malicious activity deep within the network traffic entering and leaving your computer to ensure that attackers are blocked from exploiting weaknesses in your computer's operating system and the software running on it. This defense technique is particularly effective at blocking web-based attacks, which have increasingly become the attack vector of choice."

Another technology found in Norton Internet Security is Symantec's SONAR technology, which monitors the regular execution of software applications on your computer by looking for signs of trouble that typically indicate the presence of malware. To avoid phishing scams, many security suites, including Norton Internet Security, offer the ability to block known dangerous websites and emails by scanning content before you open it. For instance, anti-phishing tools will look through links in emails to assure that they aren't taking you to malware-filled websites. "One up-and-coming threat is ransomware," says Egan, "an attack in which cybercriminals use malicious software to lock your computer and then demand a fine in order to unlock it. A strong security suite can prevent this locking software from ever installing itself on your computer, whereas a basic antivirus program would not."



Anti-phishing tools can help protect you by keeping your Web browser from accessing suspect websites.

Microsoft account

Reset your password

Get help with a forgotten password and

What problem are you having signing in?

- I forgot my password
- I know my password and Microsoft account, but can't
- I think someone else is using my Microsoft account

Cancel

You may need to reset your email password to prevent a hacker from sending out further emails.

Password Strength

Although a single word may be easy to remember, keep in mind that brute-force hacking tools often begin by going through common dictionary words. And because some Web sites require a number in the password, the automatic hacking tools typically add a single digit behind the common words and phrases. Thus, a password such as "home5" isn't any more secure than "home." Egan told us, "A strong password will be at least eight characters long and include upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and symbols. Remember that you are trying to make it as difficult as possible for someone else to guess or crack, so the longer the better."

The downside is that a random assortment of characters is difficult to remember, so a long set of mixed characters isn't really practical. Fortunately, there are a few easy tips for creating complex passwords that are memorable. One common method is to use the first letters of a favorite phrase or lyric. For instance, "I pledge allegiance to the flag and to the republic for which it stands" could become Ipa2tFattRfwis. In this example, we mixed the upper-case and lower-case letters by capitalizing the letters for "flag" and "republic," as well as replacing the word "to" with the number "2." The key is that the phrase must be easily remembered and that it fit within the prescribed password size and format requirements. Again, though, the longer the better.

Why You Shouldn't Repeat Passwords

Do you use the same password for all of your online accounts? Many do, but it's not a good practice. Even if the password is very complex, once a hacker steals one password, he can use it on the rest of your accounts. "Everyone is aware that it can be disastrous if cybercriminals gain access to your banking accounts, but it can be equally harmful if email and social networking accounts are left poorly protected, since they can be used to verify other accounts and to reset passwords. You should make sure the passwords for those accounts are complex and that they are changed every few months," said Egan.

The problem is that it's tough for us to remember the all the different passwords we need, or even which passwords correlate with a given Web service. And storing the passwords somewhere—whether it be on a sticky note or a spreadsheet on your PC—isn't advisable because someone who broke into your home would have access to all your passwords. Egan recommended that readers "consider using a password manager, such as Norton Identity Safe, which will save you the hassle of remembering the password for each site. It's also a good idea to log out when you're finished accessing sensitive accounts."

Once the password manager has your usernames and passwords stored, the software will automatically and



Ensure that you're using strong passwords for your email accounts.

Secure Browsing	Secure browsing is currently enabled.					
ogin Notifications	Text message notifications are enabled .					
ogin Approvals	A security code is not required when logging in from an unknown browser.					
ode Generator	Code Generator is enabled .					
pp Passwords	You haven't created app passwords.					
rusted Contacts	You don't have any trusted contacts set.					
ecognized Devices	You won't get notified or have to confirm your identity when logging in from these devices:					
	IE on Windows	May 30, 2013 · Remove				
	IE on Windows	May 21, 2013 · Remove				
	IE on Windows	May 14, 2013 · Remove				
	Firefox on Windows	May 7, 2013 · Remove				
	Facebook for iPhone	April 3, 2013 · Remove				
	upstairs computer	April 2, 2013 · Remove				
	ios	April 2, 2013 · Remove				
	Internet Explorer work	January 15, 2013 · Remove				
	work	January 15, 2013 · Remove				
	home	January 13, 2013 · Remove				
	ios	September 22, 2012 · Remove				
	Skype	May 12, 2012 · Remove				
	Save Changes Cancel					
ctive Sessions	Logged in from Lincoln, NE, US and 7 other locations.					
eactivate your account.						

The Security section of Facebook allows you to find out when and where Facebook has detected logins.

securely log on to the sites you enter by automatically filling in the open fields. Besides reducing the burden of remembering the credentials, this method also helps to defeat hackers who use keyloggers to monitor the keys you press. Some password managers also feature a random password generator, which is a great tool for creating highly secure passwords. After a password is generated, the software will save the password and associate it with the website and username you prefer, so you'll never need to remember the complex sequence.

What To Do If You're Hacked

"If you suspect that your accounts have been hacked, take action immediately by shutting down or changing the password for any affected accounts," said Egan, "Notify your account provider and give as many details as possible. Let your friends and family know you've been hacked and that they shouldn't click on links in suspicious emails from you or posts on social networks. Also, run a security scan on your computer to make sure no malicious programs have been installed."

Most websites that require a login, including Outlook.com, Gmail, and Facebook, include detailed instructions about what you should do if your account has been compromised. Most online services offer some form of account recovery options, so you'll be able to reset the password or gain access to the account through an alternate email or mobile phone number if the hackers has changed the password. Some websites also have an account history, so you may be able to determine when your account was logged into. Check regularly to see if hackers are logging into your account.

Egan told us, "If your account has access to your financial details, like your credit cards, check your banking and credit reports carefully. The sooner you catch fraudulent behavior, the easier it will be to refute."

A Final Check

In addition to changing your password and examining your account recovery, check back through your email account settings to make sure nothing has been changed. It's possible that the hacker configured your account with a forwarding rule, so he can continue to monitor your email account. Once you're changed the password and examined your account settings, you should be able to return to your online accounts with relative confidence in the new security.



A Smart Solution For Better Grades

Get more out of lectures, labs, and study groups with the Sky wifi smartpen from Livescribe

Easily digitize handwritten notes, charts, graphs, and drawings while adding the richness of audio where and when you want it. Upload and access those recordings and notes on almost any device, any time, anywhere.

he downside to taking handwritten notes in class is trying to keep up with everything being said by your instructor and classmates. But not if you have the 2GB Sky wifi smartpen from Livescribe. It records everything you write and hear, and automatically delivers it to your free Evernote® account.

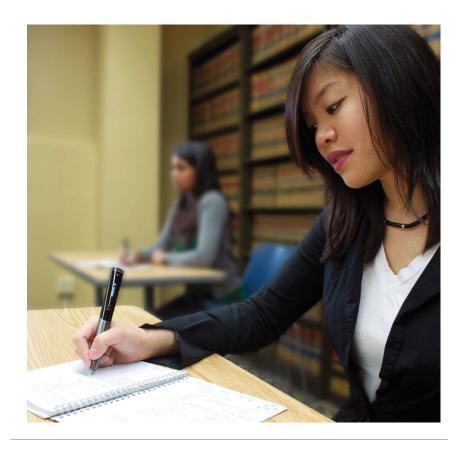
During Lectures

Because the Sky wifi smartpen can sync the sound it records with the notes you take, you can focus on what's imporant. As you're scribbling furiously to keep up in your lecture, you may miss some important information. While reviewing your notes, tap any word on your page and Sky will play back the audio that was recorded at that moment in time.

If you hear some information that you missed the first time, simply write it down while listening to your lecture play back. Sky automatically syncs your new note to the recorded audio.

To Your Digital World

Built-in Wi-Fi and seamless Evernote integration make uploading your notes and audio effortless. To upload, just turn the smartpen on when you're within range of a Wi-Fi signal and connect to the network. If you need the notes right away, aren't within Wi-Fi range, or can't get on a Wi-Fi network, simply use the included USB cable to upload your notes.



The smartpen's 2GB of memory provides enough storage to hold 200 hours of audio and thousands of pages of notes. Livescribe includes a dot paper notebook with 50 sheets to get you started, as well as two ink cartridges and a micro-USB cable for charging the pen.

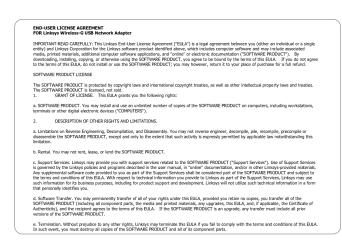
Before The Big Test

Evernote integration means that everything you need for your midterm or final is accessible via any laptop, smartphone, or tablet on Mac, PC, iOS, or Android. Within Evernote, you can search entire notebooks to find and review your notes, audio files, and pencasts (interactive "movies" of your synced notes and audio), add pictures and URLs to those notes, organize them into custom notebooks, and share them with your study group.

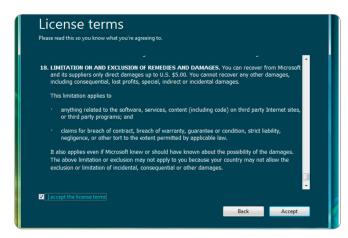
Digitized notes, Wi-Fi transfer, broad device support, and Evernote integration make the 2GB Sky wifi smartpen the perfect classroom tool.

Software Audits

Could You Pass One?



End User Agreement Agreements can be long and full of (often confusing) legal terminology.



Many EULAs are electronic, so you'll have to accept the terms in order to use the software. When you do, you've just signed a contract.

udits aren't only for taxes and accounting. Your business may find itself dealing with mandatory software audits conducted by software publishers or associations of software developers. As with a finance audit, a small business can get into trouble for being non-compliant and can be subject to large fines and legal fees if it's determined that you're abusing software licenses. We'll tell you what you need to know about ensuring software compliance.

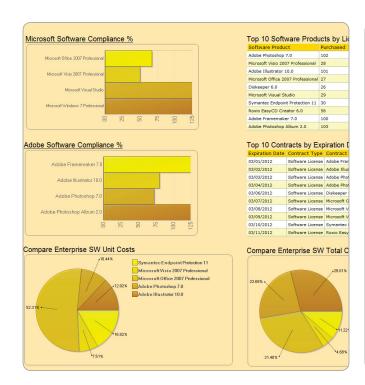
The Software License

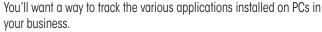
"Software is not purchased outright like some other media or content. Software is licensed by the publisher, meaning the end user is granted a certain set of rights to use the program under certain conditions," says Rene Albury, director of corporate anti-piracy for the SIIA (Software & Information Industry Association). She says that you must be in compliance with those conditions to ensure that you're meeting the specifications, standards, and codes delineated in the software license. Unfortunately, software licenses are often confusing, and few offer easy-to-follow sets of procedures. Instead, a software license is often a complex legal document that often confuses rather than clarifies.

According to Albury, "Software licenses can vary widely between publishers and are typically dependent on the type of software being licensed and the environment in which it is used." One of the most common types of license agreements is a EULA (End User License Agreement), which is a contract the gives you the right to use the software. "EULA is sometimes referred to as 'clickwrap'

or 'shrinkwrap'," says Albury. The EULA is so named because the customer will read and accept the license only after he or she has opened the product, and generally, the EULA is a click-through that is displayed electronically often after the software has been installed. The click-through style makes it difficult to read through, and you'll likely have to search online to find a copy of the text for reference if you have a question about the license rights.

That said, Albury notes that these are the most general of licenses, "and they may be superseded by an agreement directly between the licensee and the software company. Some companies negotiate directly with the publisher and that agreement takes precedence over the EULA." Most small businesses will be purchasing a small enough number of







Microsoft's Software Asset Management system helps you determine what software you have running in order to optimize your investment in Microsoft products.

licenses that you'll be subject to the software's default EULA. There are a number of other types of licenses you may have to deal with, including concurrent use licenses, site licenses, perpetual licenses, and maintenance licenses.

"Concurrent use licenses permit the user to install the software on multiple machines as long as the total number of users at any given time does not exceed the number of licenses granted," says Albury, and "different mechanisms are used to measure deployment."

Most consumer software uses a perpetual site license, meaning that you'll be able to use the software for an indefinite period of time. "Site licenses allow the software to be installed without limitation at a certain location or by a certain entity, while a license with maintenance is a license that allows the user to obtain updates or technical support on an

ongoing basis from the publisher by paying an additional fee," she says. Obviously, it's important for any small business to read and understand the terms of a license agreement before deploying it across the company's PCs and portable devices.

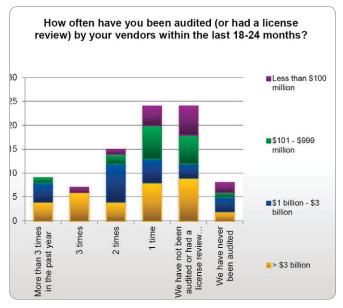
The Audit Process

A software compliance audit normally begins with an initial

contact via email or telephone notifing you of the audit. You'll need to have documentation that proves that you own the licenses for the software used on the computers in your office. You can perform an internal audit if you want to ensure that the software is in compliance with your records before the actual audit occurs. You should know which computers will be included in the audit.

Likelihood Of An Audit

recent study from the Flexera Software found that 64% of enterprises surveyed had been audited over the last 18-24 months, and large enterprises (those with more than \$1 billion in revenue) were more likely to be audited three times or more in the same time frame. Microsoft was the most likely to audit companies: 51% of respondents said they had been contacted by the software giant. Oracle (27%), IBM (24%), SAP (22%), and Adobe (19%) were also among the most frequent auditors.





Flexera Software found that nearly 25% of enterprises were audited at least once within the last 18-24 months.

Microsoft's True-Up Timeline will help you ensure that your licenses reflect your business needs.

For example, will the company be analyzing the computers currently running in the office, or will they also look through obsolete machines sitting in storage? Ask the auditor or have legal counsel assist with the scope of the audit. Keep in mind that you'll need to be compliant with the license, usage, and rights for all business applications. You may need to explain any discrepencies between what software is running on your PCs, the rights of usage, and the number of licenses your company possesses.

What Kind Of Damages Could You Face?

If you are exceeding the licensing terms, many software companies will have you pay a "true-up" penalty that allows the software developer to receive monetary compensation for the overused software. Flexera Software's 2012 Software Pricing and Licensing Survey found that 24% of enterprises surveyed said that their

true-up total paid over the past year was \$1 million or more. Additionally, more than a third (36%) had a true-up cost of \$300,000, and over half paid more than \$100,000. The survey found that major software vendors, such as Microsoft, Oracle, IBM, SAP, and Adobe, were the most likely to pursue an audit. United States copyright laws allow for civil damages of as much as \$150,000 per title infringed, while criminal penalties can result in fines of up

to \$250,000 and imprisonment for up to five years.

Albury told us, "The law doesn't make a distinction between the types of software being infringed or the value of the software (i.e., \$10 software application or a \$10,000 application). If the software is being infringed, the copyright owner may sue for damages under the Copyright Act." Some software developers write a clause into their agreements that requires you to check your current license

Perform Audits Before Software Purchase

If you're planning on investing in new applications for your business, now may be a good time to have an internal software audit. "First it gives you a baseline to see what the employees are currently using, says SIIA's Rene Albury. "From that, you can identity whether the company has license deficiencies or in some cases may have purchased too many licenses, ultimately saving the company money. It also allows you to clean up the environment before rolling out any new software, ensuring that all software that is deployed is properly licensed."

Software & Information Industry Association



The SIIA (Software & Information Industry Association) can perform software audits for publishers and pre-audits for business owners.

Getting to License Compliance

If Oracle Corporation identifies a license violation, it will provide written r the non-compliant organization and generally will allow thirty days for ob licenses or otherwise correcting the violation. Oracle LMS and the comm customer or partner in obtaining the appropriate licenses for the desired

The license compliance shortfall may be corrected in one of the following

- Through the purchase of sufficient licenses and associated support to shortfall. Backdated support may also be assessed for the period of ur
- If the customer removes the Oracle software, or reconfigures their hard license and associated support can be purchased to cover the period of

Oracle endeavors to resolve license compliance violations in a fair and a business resolution cannot be obtained, the resolution will be escalated through Oracle's Legal Department. Remedies open to Oracle include, b

- Charging full list price for additional software licenses required to corre
- Charging technical support fees for the period of unlicensed use of the
- · Suspension of technical support service and software updates, where
- Termination of the license agreement and associated licenses
- Cancellation of OPN status and sublicense rights

Oracle outlines the types of penalties to which you may be subject if a license violation is found.

usages occasionally. For example, users of Microsoft's Enterprise Agreement must submit an annual true-up to account for changes in the software usages.

In terms of fines, Albury notes that, "The SIIA demands three times the MSRP value of the infringing software, plus attorney's fees. This multiple ensures that there is a penalty for non-compliance that will serve as a deterrent. Infringers must also destroy the illegal software and repurchase new, legitimate software from an authorized reseller. Additionally, they must perform ongoing routine audits."

A software developer may offer specific remedies when rectifying compliance issues. For example, Oracle may charge you the full list price for additional software licenses required to correct the license violation, charge technical support fees for the period of unlicensed software, suspend technical support services and updates, or even terminate the license agreement-all depending on the nature of the license violation.

Record Management

You should have a designated person in charge of making software purchasesand for documenting those purchases. "Companies should also be aware that some software publishers have the right to do routine audits to ensure that their software is being used in accordance with the license agreement. A company that centralizes its software purchases and runs routine internal audits should be ready for any potential audit," says Albury.

If you don't have the resources to monitor software compliance, you can hire a third party or purchase software that will help you manage your software purchases.

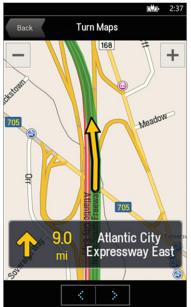
You may also opt to use a software reseller to help with licensing. Albury told us, "The larger software resellers can track your purchase history and provide audit tools as part of your agreement. They may be able to provide consulting support, license discovery, and other IT services for small businesses that lack the resources to hire an IT team." Your local specialized reseller might also offer programs for ensuring that businesses stay compliant.

Even very small businesses should be doing routine audits for software compliance. The penalties to get back into compliance with a software provider are too great and too costly to take lightly. And once you set up a process that includes that sort of documentation, the process of determining whether or not your licenses are in order shouldn't take a great deal of your time.

Mobile Marketplace

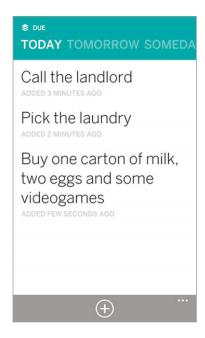
Business Apps For Android, iOS, Windows Phone, & BlackBerry

Some powerful business tools are floating in the sea of smartphone apps. Each month, we'll highlight some of the best ones for Android, iOS, Windows Phone and BlackBerry platform users. (Unless otherwise noted, Windows apps are available in the Windows Phones Apps & Games Store, Android apps in Google Play, iOS apps in Apple's App Store, and BlackBerry apps in the BlackBerry World app store.)





Paired with the right app, your smartphone can perform as well as a dedicated GPS device. Co-Pilot GPS is definitely the right app. It lets you download maps to help you get where you're going even when you don't have a cellular signal. It features millions of points of interest, including gas stations, restaurants, and rest stops; alternate route choices; walking routes; and door-to-door route planning. You also get a free trial of CoPilot's voice-guided navigation and ActiveTraffic features. If you like the latter two, you can purchase them for a fee.



Due Windows Phone

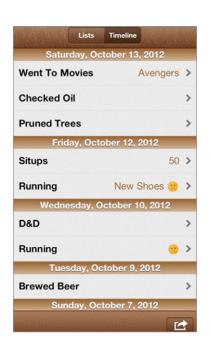
Some folks require a calendarbased task scheduler just to keep up. Due, on the other hand, was designed for those with less stricture. For instance, Due only schedules tasks for Today, Tomorrow, and Someday. As you'd expect, items on the Tomorrow list automatically move to the Today list the next day. You can also manually move items between lists as you see fit. Each item also displays how long ago it was added, so you can see how long you've been putting off that certain something. The Start screen tile also displays today's tasks as a reminder.



Splashtop 2

Windows Phone

We've covered Splashtop in the past, but in this latest version you'll find a much more powerful remote desktop access app. Connected via Wi-Fi, you can control and view items on your desktop right from your Windows Phone. With the optional Anywhere Access Pack (fee required), you can do the same over a 3G/4G cellular network connection. Supported application types include PC or Mac apps, games, audio and video files at up to 30 frames per second, photos, and more. Supported apps include PowerPoint, Keynote, Word, Excel, Outlook, Quicken, Internet Explorer, Chrome, and more.



Last Time



With a traditional task scheduler. appointments and important events disappear when they're marked complete or they expire. But with Last Time, you record recurring events to keep track of the last time you did something: visited the dentist, changed the cabin air filter on your car, cleaned the drier vent, or changed the batteries in your smoke alarms. This app features a List mode and a Timeline mode. In the former, you can see items organized into categories, such as Home, Recreation, Car, Health, and Entertainment. The latter mode displays items in chronological order.



Maplets



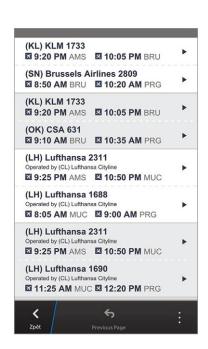
Maplets is an offline mapping application that lets you download from a library of more than 10,000 detailed maps that will supplement your other mapping applications, such as Google Maps or Apple Maps. There are more than 1,000 national parks maps, including Yosemite, Yellowstone, Grand Canyon; state parks in every state; local city parks; metro and transit maps, including New York City Subway, the London Tube, the Paris Metro, Washington Metro, and more. The app also provides access to a vast collection of bike trail maps and maps for parks that allow RVs.



Official Hotkeys



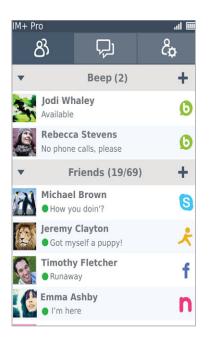
If you spend a significant amount of time using Microsoft's Office products, then check out SeHeon Park's Official Hotkey-Microsoft Version. This utility displays a list of the hotkey shortcuts available for Microsoft Office applications, including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, and Outlook. Just tap the application you want to explore from the main menu, and you'll see a list of the hotkeys available for it. This app has the potential to streamline your work flows and dramatically improve your Microsoft Office proficiency.



FlightStats

BlackBerry

When flying, you really can't overstate the importance of the arrivals and departures board. It's where you find the gate and it's what helps make sure you get there on time. Do you have time for a restroom break and coffee, or should you start running now? The problem is, though, the arrivals and departures boards are located in the terminals, sometimes at odd intervals. With Flight-Stats, you can check gates, departure times, airport maps, nearby concessions and amenities, and the status of any flight right from your BlackBerry. It's like having an airport information desk in your pocket.



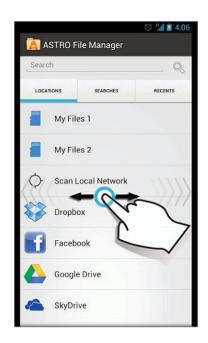
IM+ Pro BlackBerry

There are dozens of instant messaging services available. Sadly, to keep in touch with your friends, you may find yourself juggling multiple applications and logins just to stay visible to all your contacts. With IM+ Pro, you can use a single app to keep up with your Skype, MSN Messenger, AIM, ICQ, Google Talk, Facebook, and Yahoo! messaging applications, and more. The app also lets you use a master password to log in to all services at once. You can send text messages and photos, and participate in group chats. You can also customize your experience with sounds and emoticons.

App Of The Month



Your smartphone is a lot more than just a phone, but despite its many capabilities, there are still several things it can't do natively. Smart Utilities, for BlackBerry 10 devices, fills in the gaps and brings eleven tools to the device. It features a spirit level, a large battery life remaining indicator, compass, flashlight mode, metronome, an angle calculator for adjusting satellite dishes, a speedometer, network speed test, sound level meter, a task killer, and a binary/ decimal/Hexadecimal/Octal converter.



ASTRO File Manager

Android

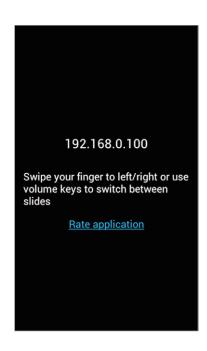
Chances are that your Android device came with a file manager, but ASTRO File Manager gives you so much more. The utility lets you manage photos, music files, videos, documents, and more. You can manage your cloudbased services folders, including Dropbox, Google Drive, Facebook Photo Albums, and more. ASTRO File Manager also lets you manage your files from the PC. The app features a robust search utility that lets you locate files by type, name, or date. The app also supports gestures, for an intuitive navigation experience.



Cerberus

Android

Cerberus is a device security app that provides, you guessed it, three ways to access your lost or stolen device. Cerberus lets you take remote control of the Android-based device via the website (www.cerberusapp. com), execute commands using text messages, or run a SIM checker that notifies you if an unrecognized SIM card is installed. Cerberus lets you locate the device on a map, sound an alarm even if the device is set to silent, wipe the internal memory and the SD card, hide the Cerberus app from the app drawer, lock the device with a code, record audio, get a list of recent calls, and more.



Presentation Remote

Android

If you give PowerPoint presentations, then you're probably fond of presentation remotes that let you advance slides without having to hover over the laptop or PC running the show. This app acts as a presentation remote, but it connects via Wi-Fi and Bluetooth and interfaces with a client you install on your PC or laptop. The interface isn't much to look at, but you can swipe right or left to go back and forward in the slideshow. The app works with PowerPoint, Prezi, Adobe Reader, Google Slides, OpenOffice, and LibreOffice. It also supports a slide timer.



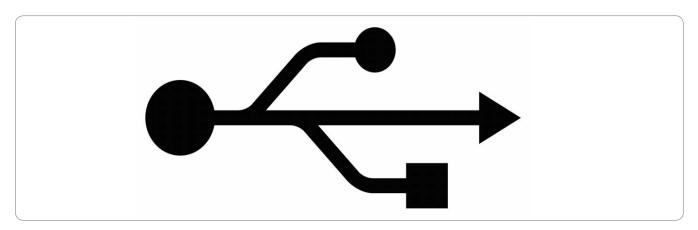




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Setting The Standard

All About USB



The USB logo is undoubtedly one of the most recognizable in computing and consumer electronics.

f there's one interface that has achieved near universal ubiquity, it's USB (Universal Serial Bus). Since its introduction in 1996, the protocol has gone on to become the dominant standard used to connect and power PC such peripherals as mice, keyboards, printers, scanners, game controllers and joysticks, webcams, and external storage devices. But beyond the PC, USB is used today to charge up and transfer data to and from smartphones, tablets, digital cameras, and camcorders. Gaming consoles and handhelds use it for connecting controllers and chargers;, GPS devices use USB to get map updates; you can transfer images to digital photo frames via USB; and numerous coffee warmers, beverage coolers, motorized foam dart guns, LED lights, external fans, and other components on computing's periphery utilize the jack-of-alltrades USB protocol. It's safe to say that USB is here to stay. In this article, we'll cover USB from its infancy to maturity and beyond.

Port Origins

Like other standards in the computing industry, USB was the result of a consortium of companies, in this case, a group that included Compaq, DEC, IBM, Intel, Microsoft, NEC, and Nortel. The goal was to produce a new standard that could be used to transfer data between PCs and peripherals more quickly and at a lower cost than was possible at the time using PS-2 (mice and keyboards), and parallel ports (mostly printers), and RS-232 serial connections (mostly modems).

These port types all had a variety of drawbacks, among which one of the most important was the lack of support for expansion hubs: If you wanted another parallel port or a couple more COM ports, you had to open the PC and install an expansion card.

Performance was another big limiting factor for early PC peripherals using these interfaces. RS-232 serial and parallel port throughputs topped out at 251Kbps (Kilobytes per second) and 965Kbps, respectively.

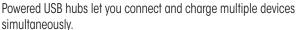
USB went through several revisions between November 1994 and November 1995, when the USB 1.0 release candidate was announced. Two months later, the final spec called for an interface capable of operating in two modes: a 1.5Mbps (megabits per second) Low Speed mode and a 12Mbps High Speed mode.

USB consists of a host-based architecture capable of supporting multiple peripherals. The specification calls for the potential connection of up to 127 devices, via multiple hubs, to a lone host controller. The host controller has a built-in hub, called the root hub, and it centrally manages the individual devices and auxiliary hubs connected to it.

Unlike FireWire, a competing protocol, the USB host controller relies on the CPU and software for its processes. This puts some additional strain on the system, but makes

Personal Technology







The five USB 3.0 pins reside deeper inside the connector than the four legacy USB pins.

USB more affordable for component makers.

The ability of a low-powered USB device to draw power directly from the USB port is another of the specification's defining features. USB is capable of delivering up to 500mA (milliamperes) to a single port for powering a connected device, but the power gets divided among subsequent ports when more than one device is connected. Regarding hubs, if four USB devices are present, each one will only get 100mA, which may not be enough to power the device. Powered hubs come with AC adapters that enable the hub to supply the full 500mA to each device.

USB 1.0 failed to garner much attention due to a handful of limitations, including the lack of support for extension cables and passthrough monitors. In 1998, USB 1.1, or full-speed USB, became the first revision of the specification to see widespread adoption.

Not surprisingly, Microsoft played a major role in the adoption of USB. Windows 95 didn't natively support USB, nor could users patch it to support USB until OEM Service Release 2.1 and 2.5, which came out in August of 1996. If you didn't have one of those two versions, Microsoft recommended that you install Windows 98 Second Edition. First Edition did support USB, as well as USB composite devices (such as a webcam with a built-in microphone) at launch, but it wasn't until Win98 SE that USB audio device support was added. Win98 SE also came with better WDM (Windows Driver Model) support, which was Microsoft's latest device driver framework, setting the stage for USB's mammoth success.

USB 2.0

Toward the end of 2001, the USB Implementers Forum (USB-IF) ratified USB 2.0, which brought higher data rates to the specification: 480Mbps, which was a 40-fold increase compared to USB 1.1's 12Mbps data rate. USB 2.0, dubbed High-Speed USB, also saw the introduction of small form factor connectors. Over the span of its life, USB 2.0 added several new features, such as USB-On-The-Go, which allows two USB devices to communicate without first being connected to a host device. Another advance was USB 2.0's Battery Charging Specification, which let device manufacturers ship power supplies with USB connectors.

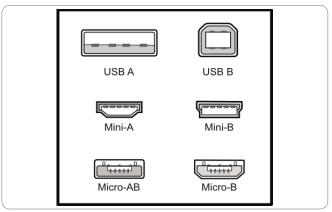
USB 2.0 is now the most common interface for computers, peripherals, consumer electronics, and more. According to the USB-IF, USB has an installed base of over 10 billion products, and the industry ships more than three billion USB products a year, including a billion or more mobile phones and over 150 million USB flash drives.

USB 3.0

USB 3.0, or SuperSpeed USB, is the latest revision of the Universal Serial Bus standard. It brings theoretical transfer rates of up to 5Gbps (Gigabits per second), more power, and quick-

Personal Technology





The USB-IF plans to put SuperSpeed USB into high gear later this year.

USB-based devices support a variety of different connectors.

er recharging for energy-demanding devices (up to 900mA), new power management features, and backward compatibility with USB 2.0.

SuperSpeed USB's arrival begs the question: Wasn't USB 2.0 and its peak raw data rate of 480Mbps already fast enough? Apparently not. SuperSpeed USB's killer apps won't be thumb drives in the shapes of cartoon characters. Instead, they'll be external hard drives and highdefinition webcams, displays, digital camcorders and cameras: as well as multi-channel audio and external media drives such as Blu-Ray players, all of which demand the highest possible data transfer rates.

In November 2008, the USB 3.0 Promoter Group finished its work and released the 1.0 revision of the 3.0 specification.

Fast forward to late September, 2009, when NEC launched a USB 3.0 host controller. Notebooks and PCs with third-party controllers can now support SuperSpeed USB devices. SuperSpeed USB-capable devices arrived on store shelves in large numbers beginning in early 2010. Adoption of SuperSpeed USB outpaced that of USB 2.0, and in 2012, both AMD and Intel introduced chipsets that support USB 3.0 natively.

SuperSpeed USB can achieve data transfers of up to ten times that of USB 2.0, thanks to a complete redesign of the ports, connectors, and cables. USB 2.0 utilizes four pathways that correspond to power, ground, and a pair for data. USB 3.0 ports and cables utilize an additional five pathways: an additional ground and two pairs dedicated to data transmission. As a result, SuperSpeed USB can send and receive data at the same time. Another speed-booster comes in the form of SuperSpeed USB's fiber optic pathways.

The SuperSpeed USB connectors and ports have been cleverly designed so that the five USB 3.0 pins

coexist with the four legacy USB 2.0 pins, enabling full backward compatibility.

But the folks behind USB aren't finished yet. In January of 2013, the USB 3.0 Promoter Group announced plans to take SuperSpeed USB to 10Gbps. The update will remain backward compatible with existing cables and connectors and bring with it improved data encoding and I/O power efficiency. According to the group, the 10Gbps SuperSpeed USB specification should be completed by the middle of the year, bringing even faster throughputs to our bandwidth-hungry peripherals and devices.

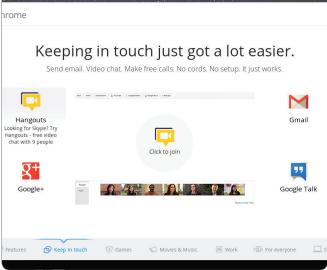
Connector Shapes

ne of the features that made USB unique for the time was support for different connectors on each end of the cable. For instance, the connector that goes into the USB port on a PC or notebook is a Type A connector, which is a horizontal rectangle. Variations of the host-side Type A connector for small form factor devices include Mini-A and Micro-A. The device end of the USB cable (Type B) will often differ in shape from the host end. The standard Type B connector is a square with tapered corners on the top side, but Mini-B and Micro-B connectors are also available for smaller devices. Depending on the device, the cable can consist of any pairing of Type A and Type B connectors. Most current smartphones, for instance, use a Type A at the host end and a Micro-B at the device end. (See illustrations above.)

Chromebooks

Everything You Need To Know About These Mini-Powerhouses





Chrome OS provides you with icons that allow you to quickly bring up your favorite Web apps.

Most Chromebooks come with Google Hangouts for built-in video chat capability.

hromebooks, which have been around since the middle of 2011, are designed to be affordable (typically less than \$300) and quick-booting the latter thanks to Google's lightweight Chrome operating system. You can also enhance the operating system by downloading Web apps and browser extensions from the Chrome Web Store. Recently, Google has announced several new Chromebooks with features like 14inch HD screens, LTE connectivity, and extra storage. We'll examine what Chromebooks have to offer.

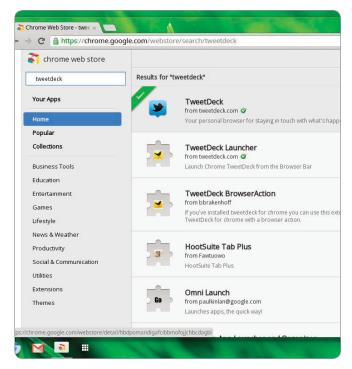
Chromebook Speed

Google boasts that a Chromebook will boot in seconds, and will resume nearly instantly from sleep. We found that many new Chromebooks feature Coreboot technology that allows the notebook to boot up in five seconds. Part of the reason for the guick boot is that the Chrome OS is built for use mainly with the Chrome browser, rather than with a more complext OS that must load hundreds of drivers and other routines. And the relative speed of a Chromebook is not powered by expensive hardware, but rather, an HTML 5-based interface that's designed to quickly work with Web applications. Online tools require less power to run than a locally installed program, because data processing is done at a powerhouse server. All you'll need to run a Web app is a reliable network connection.

Web Browser & Wep Apps

The HTML 5 interface of the Web browser ensures that you'll enjoy the powerful features of today's Web apps. There are thousands of apps available, and they run right in the Chromebook browser. These Web apps provide basic functionality for most common tasks. For example, most Chromebooks come with Google Docs (for office productivity), Gmail (for built-in email), Google Talk (for instant messaging), and Google Hangouts (for video chat). Of course, there also lots of third-party Web apps that you can download to further complement and enhance the experience. Another huge benefit of Web applications is that you'll have access to the utilities (and the files you store online) on any Internet-connected PC, not just your Chromebook, because all you need to access a Web app is your username and password.

Personal Technology





You can download additional Web apps from the Chrome Web Store.

Chromebooks come with a full keyboard and touchpad.

Affordability

The Chrome OS design allows Chromebook manufacturers to use low-end dual-core processors that run at anywhere from 1.1 to 1.7GHz and still provide the speedy interface you're used to on a traditional notebook. These processors are also low-power, which helps increase the battery life of a Chromebook. We found that many Chromebooks offer a minimum of a four-hour battery life, with some lasting up to seven hours. Other common specs include anywhere from 2GB to 4GB of memory, and a minimal amount of storage, because it's expected that most of your data will be stored in the cloud. These types of moderate components ensure that you can generally purchase a Chromebook for less than a traditional notebook.

Security

Google has designed Chrome OS with security in mind, even creating a specific set of guiding principles for practical security. For example, its Deploy Defenses In Depth is a principle that ensures there will be a series of protections to block attacks—not just one tool. The various layers make it difficult for a hacker to compromise your online accounts or exploit vulnerabilities. At the OS level, Google has hardened the software against exploit techniques with things like file sys-

tem restrictions, kernel hardening, and access control. Because the Web browser is a key component of Chrome OS, different processes are split off to limit plugins' access to local storage. Web app security is beefed up with extra ways to manage permissions. Also, the Chromebook is designed to automatically update itself, so you'll always have the most current security for your operating system and apps.

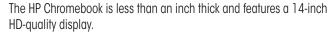
Cloud Storage

Some Chromebooks enhance storage capabilities by providing you with free storage (for a certain time) with online cloud storage services, such as Google Drive. This

With the Chrome OS, Google has designed the operating system with security in mind, even creating a specific set of guiding principles for practical security.

Personal Technology







Chromebooks typically come with the same inputs and outputs you'll find on a full-size notebook.

way, you'll be able to complement the existing storage with online storage that you'll be able to access anywhere with a Web connection. Chromebooks are compatible with a variety of third-party cloud storage services, including popular options such as Box, FileSnack, and JustCloud. Of course, a limited amount of local storage is also included to let you store critical files and personal media collections.

More Than A Netbook

The simplicity and affordability of a Chromebook causes some people to compare them with netbooks. But unlike those small, somewhat underpowered devices, Chromebooks come with full connectivity options. For example, the HP Chromebook features a 14-inch screen that supports a resolution of 1,366 x 768 for 720p video quality. The HP Chromebook also offers a HDMI output, Ethernet input, three USB 3.0 ports, an SD card reader, and a headphone-out/microphonein combo jack. For speedy loading, you'll also find a 16GB SSD (solid state drive) that ensures that any locally stored files will load almost instantaneously. The HP Chromebook itself is less than inch thick.

Internet Connectivity

All Chromebooks will come with Wi-Fi connectivity, but some also offer optional cellular data connectivity options. These allow access to the Internet from wherever you are,as long as you have a cell signal and a data plan. Because Chromebooks are designed to be used with an Internet connection, you'll need to decide where or not you'll need one with mobile broadband. Of course, investing in a data plan will mean that you'll need to pay a monthly fee with a service provider that's compatible with the Chromebook's mobile broadband receiver. If you opt to go with Wi-Fi-only, you'll need to find a Wi-Fi connection to get the most out of the Chromebook whenever you're on the road or otherwise without a Wi-Fi connection.

You'll be able to complement the existing storage with online storage that you'll be able to access anywhere with a Web connection.

Microsoft's Surface

Pro Or RT: Which One's For You?

here's a certain amount of confusion surrounding Microsoft's dual entry into the tablet space. There are two Surface tablets—at first glance, they look identical, and

Two combination keyboard/cases are available for both devices: the very thin Touch Cover, and the slightly thicker Type Cover, the latter of which features movable keys for a only by an authorized service center) and is good for up to 8 hours.

Tablet-based Office apps are included, with Microsoft Office Home & Student 2013 RT pre-installed.



The Surface RT is a 10.6-inch tablet that runs Windows RT, an operating system that feels much like (but which is less powerful than) Windows 8.

even the OSes (operating systems) look essentially the same.

But they really are different. We'll help you choose the one that best meets your needs.

First, some commonalities: Both devices feature 10.6-inch displays, full-sized USB ports, MicroSD slots to expand storage, and HD video output that allows you to project the tablet's display on a TV, monitor, or projector.

true keyboard feel.

The Surface RT runs Windows RT. a tablet OS that runs tablet-based apps, several of which are included with the device, and more of which are available at the Windows Store.

The RT comes in 32GB and 64GB versions, is .37 inches thick, and features a 1366 x 768 display. It offers stereo speakers, a full-size USB 2.0 port, a headset jack, and HD video our. The battery is replaceable (but The suite includes versions of Word. PowerPoint, Excel, and OneNote that have been optimized for tablets.

Because the device and its smallfootprint OS draw so little power, the Surface RT stays connected even in Standby mode and automatically downloads system and app updates.

If you don't need the power of a full-blown desktop-type OS or the ability to run business apps, the RT is a good fit.

Personal Technology

If you're a business user (or a student whose coursework requires heavy-duty software such as video editing or desktop publishing applications), then you may be willing to trade off the RT's light weight and great battery life for something that combines a tablet's portability with a desktop machine's processing power. If so, the Surface Pro is a viable option.

The Pro is thicker than the RT (about 1/2 inch compared to about Pro is USB 3.0, while the RT's is a USB 2.0 port.)

On the Pro, you can run desktop versions of the full-blown Office suite, including Microsoft Office 2013 or the subscription-based Office 365. (You can also install Office 2010 by connecting an external CD or DVD drive.)

The Pro includes a variety of applications preinstalled, including Windows Mail and Messaging; Sky-Drive; Internet Explorer 10; Bing;

The Pro's 1920 x 1080 resolution is better than the RT's, though the 16:9 format remains the same.

The Surface Pro's biggest selling point is that it allows you to run Windows 7 and Windows 8 programs, including custom apps written for your workplace. It also allows you to join network domains and use a standard Windows VPN to access your workplace network remotely.

One more plus, if you happen to looking for some relaxation in the



The Surface Pro runs the full version of Windows 8, and can run software optimized for either Windows 7 or Win8. Unlike the Surface RT, the Pro is a full-blown computer in tablet form.

1/3 inch) and also a bit heavier (2 pounds compared to 1.5 pounds). It comes in 64GB and 128GB versions, and offers many of the same ports and connectors that are available on the RT. (One possibly important difference: The USB port on the and Xbox Music, Video, and Games.

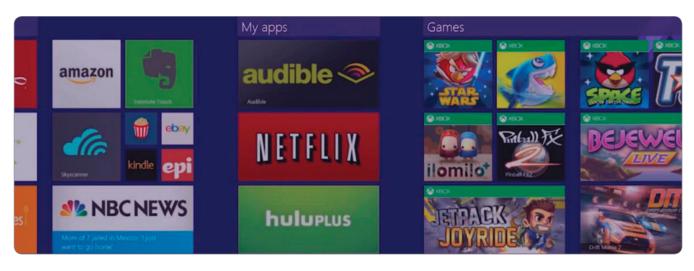
Battery life on the Pro is less than that of the RT, mainly because of the Pro's much greater processing power. For that reason, apps do not auto-update; when you shut the system down, it shuts all the way down.

midst of all of that work: The Surface Pro will run many Xbox games, although some minor Xbox-specific functionality may be missing.

The upshot is that the Pro is an impressive combination of desktop power and tablet convenience.

Windows 8.1 Expectations

What You'll See In The Next Upgrade To Windows 8



Windows 8.1 should allow you to easily group apps and pin them to the Start screen.

icrosoft has promised new and improved features with Windows 8.1, codenamed Windows Blue. At press time, amendments are said to include the return of the familiar (but previously misplaced) Start button, the ability to boot directly to the Desktop, and more customization options, such as the ability to resize Snap apps and pin apps to the Start screen. We'll examine how Microsoft has attempted to address issues that people had with the initial release of Win8.

The Goal Of Windows 8.1

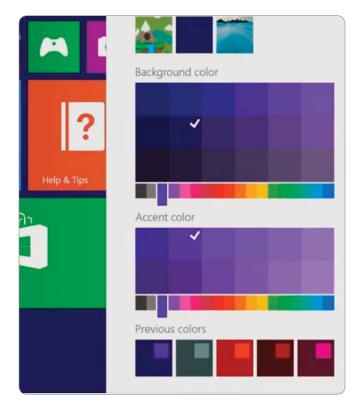
In a blog post, Microsoft said, "Windows 8.1 will advance the bold vision set forward with Windows 8 to deliver the next generation of PCs, tablets, and a range of industry devices, and the experiences customers-both consumers and busi-

nesses alike-need and will just expect moving forward." The blog goes on to say that "Windows 8.1 will deliver improvements and enhancements in key areas like personalization, search, the built-in apps, Windows Store experience, and cloud connectivity." The customization options are the types of things that people were able to change in previous versions of Windows.

SRV Network CTO Karl Volkman told us, "The new version should address a lot of the user complaints we saw with Windows 8, including that it can't be booted to the desktop and it was made with tablets in mind. Windows 8.1 will have to overcome these complaints and solve some of the productivity and usability issues associated with the old version." The new features will also go a long way toward solving the productivity and interface issues. Volkman said, "Many Windows 8 users felt they lost productivity when forced to jump back and forth between different interface styles. For example, they had to open the Desktop to navigate file folders and adjust settings, only to be tossed back to the tablet interface upon entering a search guery. Windows 8.1 allows full access to settings via the Metro Start screen, meaning less switching back and forth."

A Better PC Experience

Overall, the Windows 8.1 experience will be much easier to use with traditional PCs and devices lacking touchscreens. For instance, Microsoft has announced improvements to the Search tool that will make it. easier to find files from within the Live Tile interface, so you won't





With Windows 8.1, you'll be able to more thoroughly customize the colors and images on various screens.

SkyDrive in Windows 8.1 will offer improved functionality.

need to open Windows Explorer on the Desktop. "The lack of a Start menu was perhaps the biggest complaint about Windows 8. The new version will reintroduce the familiar Start button to the desktop's lower left-hand corner. . . [but] it seems the Start menu itself is gone for good, so users will have to get used to the Start button taking them back to the Metro Start screen," says Volkman. Windows 8.1 should also give you increased multitasking capabilities, allowing more ways to see multiple apps on one screen. You should also be able to resize apps to any dimension, share between two apps, or have up to four apps onscreen. Windows Store apps should now also run on multiple displays at the same time.

Make It Your Own

"Customizability is a huge factor in user satisfaction, and the 8.1 update will let users choose backgrounds from a host of colors and animations, as well as from their own photos," said Volkman. "Similarly, it lets users choose which new apps are added to the screen by selecting them individually from the 'all apps' page."

According to Microsoft, users will also be able to have multiple windows of the same app "snapped" together, such as two Internet Explorer windows.

One common Windows 8 Start screen annoyance on which people have commented is that any new app you install will immediately find its way on to the Start screen. With Windows 8.1, recently downloaded apps should appear in a New category in the All Apps view, so you can decide when (or if) you want to pin the new app to the Start screen.

Cloud Computing

Microsoft says that Windows 8.1 will let you save files directly to Sky-Drive, whether the files are stored on your device or only in the cloud. The SkyDrive app will also work to find local files when you're offline. Windows 8.1 will also save your personalized settings to your SkyDrive account, so you can quickly and easily set up a new Windows 8 device to match your preferences.

More To Come

These are just some of the features that Microsoft has announced, and we're sure there will be additional improvements over the next few months. Many of the announced features are designed to address common complaints about Windows 8, so the update will help make the new operating system more usable for all of us.

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STEP 2. Click on Register

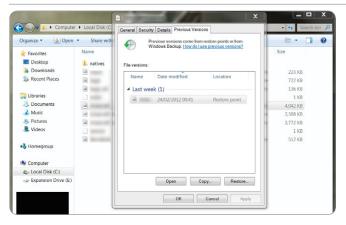
Register | Contact Us

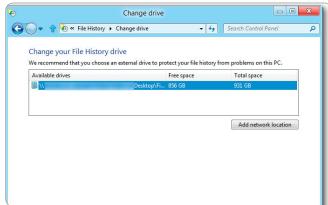
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Tips From The Help Desk

Common Tech Questions





Windows 7 allows you to restore versions of files that were saved during recent a Restore Point.

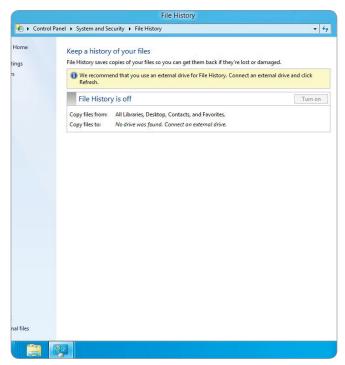
You can opt to save old versions of a File History to a shared network location.

• I accidentally changed some very important text in a document and then saved over the modifications. My friend told me to use the Volume Shadow Copy feature of Windows 7 to retrieve the old version. How does it work and how can Luse it?

■ The Volume Shadow Copy feature of Windows automatically backs up copies of files on your PC, such as Microsoft Word documents, when it creates a Restore Point. If the System Protection features of Windows 7 are automatically running, you should have access to files that have been modified since the last Restore Point has been made. Typically, Windows 7 makes Restore Points once a day. To access the old version of a file, find the file in Windows Explorer and right-click it. Next, click the Previous Versions tab and you'll see a list of the backups available. You can open a copy of the file to make sure it's the one you want to use. Once you find it, select the file and click Restore Previous Version. Then, click an item in the list and select Restore. Note that the old file will overwrite the current version, so it can't be undone. Thus, we suggest you save the current file under a different name before overwriting the old

In Windows 8, this feature is called File History, and it backs up the files stored in the Libraries, Contacts, Favorites, and Microsoft SkyDrive folders, as well as those stored on your Desktop. You can also add other folder locations to the File History backup process. But first, you'll need to setup a File History drive and turn on the File History feature. When setting up a File History drive, we'll note that Windows 8 prevents you from using the local drive where the libraries are stored, because then both the original files and backup would be lost during a crash. Therefore, you'll need to connect an external hard drive (or flash drive) or select a network location to store the File History backups.

Setting an external drive is simple, as Windows 8 will begin using it as soon as you turn on File History. With a network location, you'll need to point to the upper right corner of the screen, move the mouse pointer down, and click Search. (For touchscreens, swipe in from the right edge and tap Search.) Type File History, click Settings, and tap File History. Tap Change Drive, and select Add Network Location. Then, click Select Folder to browse for a location. Once you've found where you want to save the files, click OK. To turn File History on, just bring up the File History menu and tap or click Turn On. When you need to restore files, bring up Search and enter Restore Your Files. Select Restore Your Files With File History. Select the file you want to bring back and click Restore. You can also select Restore To, if you want to save the file to a different location.





In Windows 8, you'll need to turn File History on in order to access previous versions of files.

Many new monitors accept HDMI inputs; it's a good idea to invest a monitor with an HDMI input for future compatibility.

■ My old LCD has a few **X** ∎ "stuck" pixels, and I'm looking to replace it with a new monitor. What are some of the key features added to monitors in the past few years?

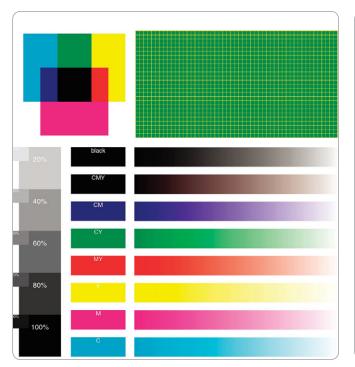
As LCD technology ■ improved, monitor manufacturers continue to offer larger and more featured-filled displays. Many of the newest LCD monitors feature screens in the 16:9 wide screen format found in today's movies and TV shows, so you won't see any black bars when watching video on your PC. Additionally, many models over 20 inches feature a native resolution compatible with HDquality video, making the large monitors better for streaming HD video from your computer. Even better, most computers now support HD quality video. The users manual for your computer will indicate which types of video outputs are supported.

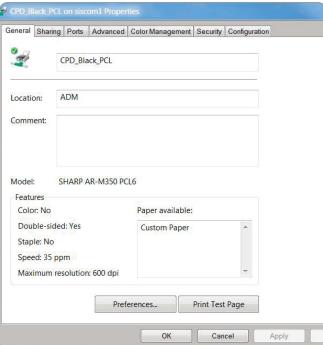
Another thing to consider with a new monitor is what type of interface, such as HDMI (High-Definition Multimedia Interface), DVI (Digital Visual Interface), or DisplayPort, is offered on your PC. The monitor you purchase should be compatible with the types of outputs found on your computer. If you're planning on upgrading a PC in the near future, you may also want to invest in a monitor that provides multiple video inputs, such as HDMI and DVI, that support both the video output of your current computer and one that you may purchase in the future. HDMI and DisplayPort are the newest standards and should be around for many years to come.

■ My printer doesn't seem to **L** be working. How can I determine whether the problem is being caused by the printer or by the computer?

One of the best ways to lo-Cate the trouble of your printing problem is to print a test page. Start by producing a test page directly on the printer. Many new printers make it easy for you to print an internal test page by navigating the menu system built into a digital display on the printer itself. Often, the print self-test page can be found under the Utilities area of the settings. A printer that's unable to produce a self-test page may be broken, in which case you may need to contact the manufacturer.

For printers able to produce the self-test page, you'll want to open up Windows' Printer dialog box, and print a test page to see if the problem lies with communication between the PC and printer. To do so in Windows 7, click the Start button, select Control Panel,





Through a printer's internal menu, you should be able to print a selftest page.

The printer's Properties window often includes a Print Test Page option.

choose Hardware And Sound, and click Printer. Then, right-click the printer you want to test and click Properties. Choose the General tab and select Print Test Page. In Windows 8, move the cursor to the Charms bar, select Search, and click Control Panel. Then, navigate the drop-down menu and select View Device And Printers. Right-click your printer and select Printer Properties, and then, click Print Test Page. Absent a Print Test Page button, you can open a different application, such as a word processor, Web browser, or photo-editing application, select File, and click Print.

If the printer starts working, then the previous application may be configured to use a different printer than the one you set up in Windows. If the printer still doesn't respond, open up the print queue dialog box that appears in the Windows System Tray (located in the bottom right-hand corner) to see if Windows can provide a more detailed reason for the problem. In some cases, you may find that a previous print job, such as a document whose job was paused, may be stuck in the queue ahead of your printout. Right-click the print job and select Cancel Print Job until your test print is at the

top of the queue. docuthe ment fails to print, Windows should generate an error message, such as "Windows Cannot Connect To The Printer." That message may help you determine the cause of the problem. If

the test page won't print, it's likely that-for whatever reason-your PC and printer are both working but cannot communicate with each other. Check your cable or wireless connection. As a last resort, you may need to uninstall and then reinstall the printer in order to fix the problem.

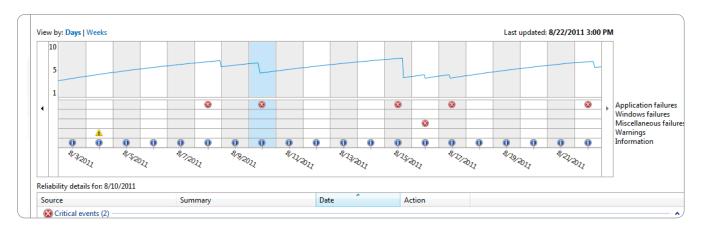
easytec

Need More Help?

Can't find a solution to your problem? You can always take your computer or other device into Staples for help. You can also order Staples EasyTech help online, and arrange for an EasyTech associate to troubleshoot remotely via the Web or even come to your home to work on your device. Go to www.staples.com/ easytech or call 1.800.378.2753.

The Windows Reliability Monitor

How To Use It & Analyze Results



The Windows Reliability Monitor graph represents a timeline of errors that have occurred with your computer.

id you know that Windows 7 and Windows 8 come with a Reliability Monitor tool that will examine the hardware and software on your PC for problems? Within the Reliability Monitor, you'll find a chart that will display the various failures that have occurred with your computer over the past few months, and the utility even breaks down the failures by category: Application Failures, Windows Failures, Miscellaneous Failures, Warnings, and Information. Because you'll be able to view issues over a timeline, the Reliability Monitor is a great tool for troubleshooting intermittent errors, such as application freezes and random hangs. You can also use the utility to find out when an error first started occurring, which will help you go back to a specific System Restore point and put your system back in time to a point where everything

was working. We'll explain how you can utilize the information in the Reliability Monitor.

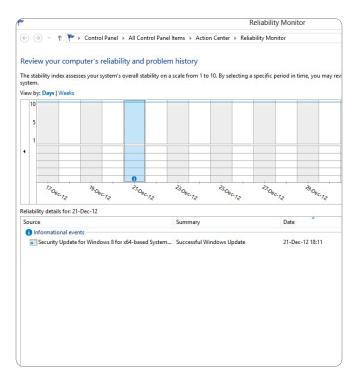
Load It Up

If your PC runs Windows 7, you can start the Reliability Monitor by clicking the Start button and typing reliability monitor. Then click View Reliability History. The resulting graph will display the various problems your PC has faced recently. In Windows 8, access your Start screen and type reliability monitor. Click Settings and choose View Reliability History. Unless your PC has never had any issues, you should see icons for various errors in the graph.

Read The Problem Reports

By default, the Reliability Monitor displays the failure events that have occurred over the past month, and the default view is

broken down by days. You can switch to weeks view, if you want to expand the event failures to a broader time frame. You can click any failure event that's occurred over the time period displayed on the chart to see more information about a specific problem. Let's say that you think that a recurring system error could have resulted from a failed update. You can click the various events in the Windows Failures category to discover which one was the one that occurred because of a Windows update. Alternatively, you may discover that the Application Failures category lists a large number of errors over the past couple months. Digging a bit deeper, you could find that the errors are due to a single application. And rather than being a Windows update issue, you could discover that the real problem might be a conflict with an application you're seeing



The Windows Reliability Monitor in Windows 8 appears similar to what it looks like in Windows 7.

eview problem reports						
flew problem reports that can be reported to Microsoft. When solutions are available, they will appear in Action Center.						
Source	Summary	Date	Status			
Adobe InDesign CS5 (37)						
Adobe InDesign CS5	Stopped working	12/13/2012 4:17 P	Report sent			
Adobe InDesign CS5	Stopped working	12/13/2012 4:28 P	Report sent			
More						
■ Diagnostics Troubleshooting	Wizard					
Diagnostics Troubleshooti	Problem not fixed	10/19/2012 11:25	No solution a			
Driver software installation (2	1) —					
Driver software installation	Installed generic driver software	2/21/2013 9:03 AM	Report sent			
	Installed generic driver software	2/21/2013 9:03 AM	Report sent			
More						
Firefox (5)						
Firefox	Stopped responding and was cl	12/18/2012 5:40 P	Report sent			
Firefox	Stopped working	2/22/2013 10:38	Report sent			
More						
Host Process for Windows Ser	vices (2)					
Host Process for Windows	Windows Update installation pr	2/21/2013 8:43 AM	Report sent			
Host Process for Windows	Windows Update installation pr	5/5/2013 9:54 AM	Report sent			
(34) Internet Explorer						
Internet Explorer	Stopped responding and was cl	10/15/2012 2:18 P	Report sent			
Internet Explorer	Stopped responding and was cl	10/22/2012 8:04	Report sent			
More						
Microsoft Excel (3)						
Microsoft Excel	Stopped responding and was cl	10/19/2012 3:53 P	Report sent			
Microsoft Excel	Stopped responding and was cl	10/19/2012 3:54 P	Report sent			
More						
▲ Microsoft SkyDrive Setup						
Microsoft SkyDrive Setup	Stopped working	5/22/2013 9:48 AM	Report sent			
Microsoft Word (2)						
Microsoft Word	Stopped responding and was cl	11/28/2012 5:34 P	Report sent			
Microsoft Word	Stopped responding and was cl	4/12/2013 10:05	Report sent			

The Problem Reports window breaks down software issues by the specific application involved.

frequently listed in the Reliability Monitor.

The Categories

As we've noted, there are five classifications of failure in the Windows Reliability Monitor. The first is Application Failures, which includes the termination of a non-responding application or any situation in which a program has suddenly stopped working. A Hardware Failure is any problem related to storage or memory. The report will list the component type and device that failed. A Windows Failure includes any issues that occur within the operating system or boot-up process, and Windows will list a stop code (for operating system problems) or reason code (for boot issues) to ease troubleshooting. Miscellaneous Failures covers any problem that doesn't fall under the previous categories. This category includes things such as unexpected shutdowns that occur during power outages, crashes, and accidental plug pulls.

Analyze The Reliability Monitor Results

The failure events will help you decide what steps you'll need to take to fix your PC or to improve reliability. Microsoft recommends that troubleshooting with prolific software failures (which cover the Application Failure and Windows Failure categories) include updating the failing applications or components of the operating system. With Windows issues, you can open Windows Update and search for patches that will address the bugs or vulnerabilities causing your problem.

To see breakdowns of individual applications, you can click the View All Problem Reports link at the bottom of the Windows Reliability Monitor screen. The Problem Reports window will show the various applications that have encountered errors, so you'll be able to refine the search to a specific program. With hardware failures, Microsoft indicates that consistent problems with one component in the Windows Reliability Monitor can be a sign of serious technical problems and that you may need to contact the manufacturer for more troubleshoot steps.

The Windows Reliability Monitor graph shows how your PC problems have occurred over time. If your PC was relatively failure-free before a certain point in time, it may be a good idea to look at the activity around the beginning of the problem period to determine if one component or application is causing problems. For example, if frequent application and memory failures started at the same time, you could start by replacing the problem memory to begin the troubleshooting process. If the failures continue, the application itself may need to be repaired, updated, or reinstalled.



Staples EasyTech Pricing

When a computer problem stops you in your tracks, it's time to take the computer to a professional who can fix the issue. And Staples' EasyTech technology support service provides you with certified experts who can help you with installation, security, repair, and maintenance. At press time, here are the most popular Staples EasyTech services offered and the associated costs.

Setup

If you purchase software at Staples, you can have it installed for you. The service in-store or online will cost you just \$29.99; you also have the option of an at-home visit for \$89.99. Staples techs can also install the physical hardware you purchase, such as memory, hard drives, modems, and peripherals. Other installation services include setting up your wireless network, printer, digital camera, GPS, or digital photo frame.

Repair & Recover

Staples provides a variety of services to protect your computer before a disaster and fix it after a problem. A system restore CD can be created for \$39.99, while a diagnostic will cost you either \$69.99 (in store) or \$159.99 (at home). If your PC crashes, you can bring it and the restore CDs into the store, and get everything put back in working order for \$129.99.

Tune Up

Is your computer no longer as fast as it used to be? Staples can perform an in-store PC tune-up for free, or they can come to your home for \$89.99. They also offer a Peace Of Mind service that gives you one year of unlimited in-store service for virus removal, software installs, hardware install, Windows Anytime Upgrade, and PC Tune Up service. The whole package costs just \$189.99.

Other Services

Check out the rest of the chart to see what other technology services are offered by Staples.

	Description Of Service	Price In Store	Price At Home	Price Online
EasyTech Pricing	What service is provided	Service performed at your local Staples store	Staples will come to your home or office	A service tech will work on your PC over the Web
Hard Drive Recovery	Assess hard drive and recover media	\$259.99	n/a	n/a
Peace Of Mind	Take existing PC and upgrade security; unlimited in-store virus removal, unlimited in-store software install, unlimited peripheral install; include PC Tune Up+	\$199	n/a	n/a
Virus Removal	Install antivirus software and remove threats	\$149	\$299.99	n/a
System Restore	Restore PC from backup	\$129.99	\$219.99	n/a
Windows OS Install	Installation of full or upgrade copy of Windows	\$99.99	\$99	n/a
Premier PC Setup	Setup new PC for you; comes with 4 hours of training	\$99	\$99	n/a
Staples Managed Anti-Virus	Protect PC against viruses	\$90	n/a	\$90
Data Backup	Transfer up to 10GB from PC to storage you provide	\$69.99	\$99	n/a
Hardware Diagnostics	EasyTech checks your hardware and software	\$69.99	\$99	n/a
Carbonite Online Backup	Unlimited online backup starting at \$59 per year, per computer.	\$59.99	n/a	\$59.99
Recovery CD	Create a backup image on a CD for use if PC crashes	\$39.99	\$99	n/a
Hard Drive	Will install a new hard drive, as well as software necessary to make the new drive functional	\$39.99	\$99	n/a
Printer Setup	EasyTech installs and configures your printer	\$29.99	\$99	\$49.99
Software	EasyTech install specified software on PC	\$29.99	\$99	\$29.99
PC Tune Up +	Boost overall speed and performance	\$9.99	\$99	\$49.99
Wireless Network	EasyTech will come to your home or office and setup Wi-Fi	n/a	\$99	n/a



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New & Noteworthy

Here, you'll find an eclectic assortment of tech and office items that are both useful and interesting, fun and practical. All of these are available at your local Staples store or on the Staples website (www.staples.com). Face it, you need some of these things!



Apple Smart Case

The Apple iPad Smart Cover, with its built-in stand and auto-wake magnetized front, is pretty slick. Just use the magnet in the spine to "clip" it to your iPad 2 or newer, and you're good to go. For some of us, though, the Smart Cover—as cool as it is—simply doesn't offer enough protection. Enter the Apple iPad Smart Case. It works much like the iPad Smart Cover, but it covers both sides of your iPad, offering a good deal more protection. It's still thin and light, and it still automatically makes your iPad wake or sleep when you open or close it.

Kingston FCR-HS3 Card Reader

This five-slot flash memory reader connects to your computer or other device using the USB 3.0 protocol, so it's super-fast. (Of course, it also works with older versions of USB—just more slowly.) A 3-foot cable and a built-in LED indicator complete the package. Accepts multiple sizes and formats of flash card. Works with Mac or Windows PCs and with other USB-compatible devices.

Bey-Berk Leather Business Card Case

OK, so it's not an electronic gadget. Still, you've got to carry business cards, right? Why not carry them in something that looks super-slick and high-tech? Tarnish-proof and sturdy, this case features real leather and is a classy way to hold your cards. Or to hold cards that you got from your classier friends.

AutoExec GripMaster With iPad Tablet Mount

If your car tends to function as your mobile office (and these days, whose car doesn't?), why not make it a safer, more efficient mobile office? The AutoExec GripMaster With iPad Tablet Mount includes a pull-out writing surface; plenty of storage compartments for files and other stuff; a rubberized, non-skid top surface to ensure that your laptop, calculator, or phone don't slide around; and a mount for your iPad. It's like having a real office in your car, but without the coffee maker and that guy from Accounting. You know. That guy.

What starts on paper, doesn't have to stay there.

